



# Edinburgh International Culture Summit

24 to 26 August 2016

---

## Friday 26 August 2016 (Morning): Culture and Participation Plenary

### CONTENTS

	<b>Col.</b>
<b>CULTURE AND PARTICIPATION</b> .....	1
David Leventhal (Programme Director and Founding Teacher, Mark Morris Dance Group's Dance for PD Programme, New York) .....	1
Matthew Peacock (Artistic Director, Streetwise Opera, London) .....	6
Jay Wang (Director, Center on Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California) .....	8
Hon Maggie Barry ONZM (Minister for the Arts, Culture and Heritage, New Zealand) .....	12
Asaduzzaman Noor (Minister of Cultural Affairs, Bangladesh).....	17
Daniel McCormick (Youth Arts Voice Scotland).....	20
Emma Ruse (Youth Arts Voice Scotland).....	21
Blair Boyle (Youth Arts Voice Scotland).....	22

---



## Culture and Participation Plenary

Friday 26 August 2016 (Morning)

[The Presiding Officer opened the session at 09:33]

**The Presiding Officer (Ken Macintosh):** Good morning. Welcome to our third plenary session and our third theme, which is culture and participation.

I ask David Leventhal to kick us off this morning. David works with the Mark Morris Dance Group and is the programme director and the founding teacher of the group's programme for Parkinson's disease, which is now used as a model in—I think—125 communities in 16 countries. I ask him to come forward and address the Summit.

09:33

**David Leventhal (Programme Director and Founding Teacher, Mark Morris Dance Group's Dance for PD Programme, New York):** Good morning, everybody. I express my sincerest thanks to the Presiding Officer, to our distinguished guests, to Sir Jonathan Mills for the invitation and to the incredible team that has organised our three days together.

I know that it is early, but I want to start with a little bit of movement to get us going. Do not worry—you can stay exactly where you are. I want us to get into the mind of a dancer. We are going to start out with some basic movement and then I will talk a little bit about how dancers think about movement differently from regular folks.

First, take your hands to one side of your table and reach down four times on that side—this is good for us, anyway—and do the same on the other side. Now, we go back to the first side again. One, two, three, four. That is very nice, everybody. Excellent. Now we go back to the other side. Brilliant.

Now, we do the same thing but with a little opening of our hands to either side. That is good—nice long fingers. Think about all that blood that you are getting circulating. Excellent. It looks great from here. I hope you can all see it. [Laughter.] Now, reach up as high as you can, stretching your arms and stretching out. Good. That is our basic movement.

Now, what if I said that you should imagine that you are putting your hands into water that is a little bit too hot, so there is a bit of a retreat? Try that. It is a little hot, so you pull back. Next, what if I said that, instead of just opening your hands, you are

receiving a gift from somebody? You have been waiting for it for 40 years, and suddenly it is there and you bring it back to you. Think of hot water and a gift, and bring it back to your heart. Ah—that changes things.

What if I say that, instead of just stretching, we are actually in a gigantic opera house? You are looking to the top balcony and all your fans are up there. Now, you look at the middle balcony, and then the mezzanine and then the orchestra. You reach up to all of them and you bow.

What if we try that with a little bit of rhythm and we go like this? One and two, open, three, bring it back, and one and two and open, bring it back. Look to the balcony, and the middle, and a little lower, and a little lower, reaching up to the circle, and bow. Wow—you are all hired. [Laughter.]

Now, what if we try that with a little bit of music?

One more time. Good. Excellent work. [Applause.]

So, we started off with some plain old movement and a little bit of stretching and we turned it into a dance phrase. What if I told you that it is from a piece by the acclaimed choreographer Mark Morris called "Falling Down Stairs", which was commissioned as part of a project done with Yo-Yo Ma? You have learned a little bit of Mark Morris choreography to start your day.

A colleague and I started leading dance classes for people with Parkinson's while I was still a full-time dancer with the Mark Morris Dance Group. In between rehearsals and performances, including several tours that brought us to the Edinburgh Festival Theatre, we found time to meet a small group of people with Parkinson's at our dance centre in Brooklyn, New York. It was quite radical at the time to see people with Parkinson's in a dance studio rather than a clinic, a hospital or a nursing home. Also radical was the fact that we facilitated a real, legitimate dance class based on technique, Mark Morris repertory like the phrase that you just learned, and creative improvisation.

We emphasised aesthetics over function, imagination over mechanics, as you just did, and creative artistry over repetition. We did not mention symptoms and we did not use the word "therapy". We were not trying to cure anyone of anything. We simply tried to share our skills and knowledge with others who could use them and, in doing so, to improve the quality of life for every individual in our class.

To be honest, at the beginning, we had no idea what we were doing, but we established three guiding principles, or maybe it is better to describe them as hunches. First, a dance programme represents a welcome antithesis to the

medicalisation that so often happens to people who are living with a chronic disease of ageing. In Parkinson's in particular, slowness, rigidity, tremor and balance issues result in people forever seeing themselves as patients. A dance class is a place where people can reidentify as dancers, lifelong learners and artists. It is a place where people are encouraged to ask not "What's the matter with me?" but "What matters to me?"

Secondly, the things that dance artists focus on in their training, which you have all just focused on—imagery, rhythm, co-ordination, expressivity, balance, fluidity and social connection—are the very things that people with Parkinson's need to address to manage their disease progression with dignity. The strategies that dancers spend their years perfecting can seamlessly and pleasurably be repurposed to help people with Parkinson's to learn to move better, express themselves and manage their lives through confidence, creativity and skill rather than relying on the medical system alone.

Thirdly, the sense of community that is created by the act of coming together to dance is as important as the movement that we do. By participating in the process of making art together, our Parkinson's dancers have a better chance of offsetting the isolation and depression that are so prevalent in that population.

The Dance for PD programme has grown from involving eight students a month to 50 students a week in our Brooklyn studios, from one location in New York to seven, and from five teachers who initially trained with us in 2007 to import the programme back to their own communities to more than 400 teachers in 16 countries around the world. As the programme has grown, our initial hunches—those guiding principles—have become supported by cold, hard scientific evidence and warm, soft and life-affirming anecdotal narratives.

We have learned a couple of things. We have learned that people view the programme as a lifeline; that they feel more confident and their self-efficacy increases; that they are able to perform at least one activity of daily living with more ease; that they integrate music and rhythm as critical tools as they move around the city; that they are more joyful and in control despite the challenges that they face; and that their walking improves.

One participant said:

"When I'm in dance class, I don't have Parkinson's".

Another participant said:

"The music and movement started, I was filled with great joy. I was able to take the whole class and walked out feeling accomplished ... I saw ... endless possibilities ... for myself."

My favourite quote is:

"It's Carnegie Hall compared to Bellevue Hospital."

People return week after week to experience the joys of dancing together, belonging and feeling that they can contribute to an artistic and cultural community of people who are like them, regardless of their level of ability or mobility. They are welcomed as valuable members of the artistic community of the Mark Morris Dance Center, the network of Dance for Parkinson's groups around the world, and the broader field of performing arts. Whereas other areas of their lives too often reinforce feelings of limitation and exclusion, their participation in the Dance for PD programme reinscribes the sense of possibility, self-worth and even hope in the face of degenerative illness. After all, Parkinson's is not just a movement disorder; it is a quality-of-life disorder. That is why dance fits Parkinson's like a glove.

Dance is, of course, a physical form, but the experience of dancing also addresses the cognitive, emotional and social issues that are specific to Parkinson's and the ageing process. Like many diseases that are typically associated with ageing, Parkinson's is, as the film maker and advocate David Iverson has said, "a disease of subtraction". Therefore, it becomes critical to change the equation into one of addition. Dance and all the arts are all about addition.

What I want you to take away today is that the intimate collaboration between dance artists and people with Parkinson's, and more broadly between dance organisations and medical organisations or social service organisations, represents a robust and successful model for how all of us in the cultural sector can leverage existing resources in our communities to address significant social and healthcare challenges.

When it is done right, at least four constituencies are served. The first is community members. It is clear that participants in our class learn strategies, think creatively, reassess their self-worth and enter into a communal state of belonging—that vital sense of connection that Jude Kelly articulated so compellingly yesterday. However, it is equally true that the programme encourages dancers, who often fail to understand how their skills can provide value beyond the stage, to embrace the fact that what they already know, practise and love can be of enormous life-changing benefit to members of their communities. Third, dance companies and arts presenters, who traditionally focus a lot of their education work on programmes for young people, are waking up to the reality that there is an audience of older adults who are not content simply to buy tickets and sit in theatres but who prefer to participate, stay active and even perform. Finally, scientists are starting to investigate the process by which dancers train and people with Parkinson's are able to find fluidity,

social connection and rhythm through dancing. Through the dance for Parkinson's system, scientists have a new window through which to research motor learning, motor control and the workings of the brain.

The tide is slowly starting to turn. When we started 15 years ago, doctors would not give us the time of day. One neurologist actually told me, "I love your programme, but dance sounds frivolous—even if it works, I couldn't possibly recommend a dance class to my patients." Fifteen years later, more than 70 per cent of the students in our New York programme come to us through physician referrals.

Maybe that is because of the abundance of personal accounts or the solid research that is now being done, or maybe it is the realisation that, with the growing prevalence of Parkinson's and the projection that, by 2050, 22 per cent of our global population will be over 60—which is double the figure now—we need solutions and answers that fall outside healthcare and inside the cultural sector.

The most exciting thing about all this is that the human resources that are needed to launch life-changing dance programmes for older people and people with Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis and dementia have already been created. To use Professor Power's term, the infrastructure is already in place. Look around your communities, cities and countries and you will see dancers who are ready, willing and able to serve and to share their expertise with members of their communities who, though they might not yet know it, are ready to come and see dance as a lifeline. Yes, dancers have to be paid, partnerships have to be formed and venues have to be found, but my message is not foremost about money or funding; it is about leveraging the potential of artists who are already among us and who are already here to deliver participatory activities that help all of us, Parkinsonian or not, to maintain quality of life and physical ability well into our later years. Dancers are here, we are ready and we want to contribute.

There is a saying in the disability community, "Nothing about us without us." In that spirit, I will introduce you to Cyndy Gilbertson, who will conclude the session.

*The Summit viewed an excerpt from David Iverson's "Capturing Grace".*

[Applause.]

**David Leventhal:** Thank you. It has been a great pleasure and an honour to speak with you this morning. [Applause.]

**The Presiding Officer:** Thank you very much, David. That was not just uplifting; it was also a

great way to start a Friday morning. I will try it out on my MSP colleagues when Parliament resumes.

Our next speaker is Matthew Peacock from Streetwise Opera. Founded in 2002, Streetwise Opera is a charity that uses music to help people who have experienced homelessness to make positive changes in their lives.

09:54

**Matthew Peacock (Artistic Director, Streetwise Opera, London):** Presiding Officer, ladies and gentlemen, it is a real honour to be here. I thank Jonathan Mills for the invitation, and I thank David Leventhal for his beautiful presentation and his beautiful work. I am particularly thrilled to be back in Edinburgh, where I was a student. The place holds a very special place in my heart, and always will.

In 2000, I was a support worker in a night shelter for homeless people in London. One night after dinner, a resident read out a newspaper quotation from a politician, who said:

"the homeless are the people you step over coming out of the Opera House."

The homeless people there that night did not want just soup and blankets: they also wanted dignity and respect. They said that if they were in an opera, it would show a different side of homelessness. Together, we got hold of the opera house for two days and put on a show. That developed into Streetwise Opera. We now run, across five regions in England, regular music activities that are embedded in homelessness centres and large arts institutions, including Sage Gateshead and the Southbank Centre. We stage operas starring performers who have experienced homelessness, and we provide homeless people with progression activities and with volunteering and work experience in the arts.

We have expanded internationally and, last month, we launched "With One Voice", which is a global arts and homelessness network that aims to bring together projects of all kinds to share practice and policy. "With One Voice" was launched at the Cultural Olympiad in Rio, where we have been working for three years with the city council, the Homeless People's Movement, arts organisations, the British Council, the church and non-governmental organisations to nurture new projects and to build the first arts and homelessness sector locally. During the Cultural Olympiad, we brought delegates from all over the world to create an occupation of the streets by arts and people. It was a festival that homeless people had designed to give visibility and dignity to Rio's street population.

Back in the United Kingdom, in March this year we had our first televised production on the BBC.

It was a new opera based on Bach's "St Matthew Passion". Produced in co-production with The Sixteen, which is one of the world's greatest choirs, it featured a newly commissioned chorus that was created by our performers working with Sir James MacMillan, who is Scotland's most celebrated composer. A short documentary will now be played to show you what happened.

*The Summit viewed "Streetwise Opera and The Sixteen's The Passion".*

**Matthew Peacock:** When Streetwise Opera started 15 years ago, it became clear immediately that it was not simply an exercise in changing public attitudes to homelessness: Streetwise Opera is also fulfilling some significant unmet needs. Homelessness is not just about housing. People who have experienced homelessness face many other challenges across mental and physical health. Wellbeing measures for the homeless population are three times lower than the national average in England. Homeless people's life expectancy is 47 years and homeless people are nine times more likely to kill themselves. Homeless people also face chronic isolation and, even after being rehoused, often suffer from loneliness, which results in 25 per cent of them going back on to the streets. We at Streetwise and many similar arts and homelessness organisations focus on using the arts as a tool to improve wellbeing and social inclusion, and to build a bridge for them back into mainstream society.

Last year, 97 per cent of our performers demonstrated increases in mental and physical wellbeing, 84 per cent tried new activities in the community outside Streetwise, and 83 per cent reported improved relationships with the people around them. Examples include Danny, in the film, who re-established contact with his daughters. A performer from Newcastle was so proud of himself that he made contact with his family for the first time in over a decade, and his six-year-old granddaughter, who he had never met before, came to see him in the show. A choir member in Rio said that after the Cultural Olympiad the police are treating him differently and moving him on less, and a heroin addict said that being in Streetwise Opera had helped him look his children in the eye for the first time in 25 years—he is now a senior drug support worker.

Behind those statistics and stories, the reason why it is working is profound and sometimes hard to measure, but is often the most important bit of all. I believe that, across society, the arts give people pride and dignity, permission to believe in themselves, the opportunity to be defined by their achievements and not their needs and, crucially, a new identity. We all know how important it is to feel that we have an identity and purpose. People's first question for us is often, "What do

you do?" Many Streetwise performers tell us how transformational it is to say "I'm a Streetwise Opera performer."

There are 60 incredible arts and homelessness projects across the UK, and our first global mapping exercise through "With One Voice" shows that there are about 250 arts and homelessness projects worldwide. The great challenge and the great opportunity for the work is to ensure that those projects do not remain in an isolated bubble, but become mainstreamed into social welfare. We talk about a jigsaw of support for homelessness—the jigsaw being made up of pieces that contribute to the whole picture of support, including healthcare, housing and education. The arts need to be seen as an equally important piece of that jigsaw. My dream and my plea, which I want you to take back to your countries and your work, is that policy makers from different departments and homeless people sit around the same table and look at homelessness in an holistic way, and ask how the arts can contribute. It happens sometimes, but not enough. As Michael Gowan so eloquently put it yesterday, the arts can contribute to all sectors. I say to the whole youth delegation, "Please hold on to the incredible passion that we have seen, carry on being ambitious and dream big, and please remember that the impossible is often only a matter of perspective."

Art and creativity is part of everyone; it is not a luxury or budget line, but a resource and a human right. We can help to solve social issues, so help us to work together—cross-department, cross-party and cross-continent—to change the lives of more people for the better. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

**The Presiding Officer:** Thank you very much, Matthew.

Our next speaker is Jay Wang, who is the director of the Center on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California, and a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles' Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.

10:05

**Jay Wang (Director, Center on Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California):** Thank you, Presiding Officer, and good morning everyone. It is a great honour to be here. We are delighted to be a knowledge partner of this year's Cultural Summit. On behalf of the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, I congratulate Jonathan Mills and the Edinburgh International Culture Summit Foundation on hosting this timely discussion on the enduring and transformative role that culture plays in society. As a representative of an

academic institution, I will not be dancing and singing for you. However, I want you to know that the partnership is important for us—it is important because it is part of our initiative to bridge the study and practice gap.

The Center on Public Diplomacy was established at the University of Southern California at Los Angeles in 2003. Over the past decade, we have built a robust platform for public diplomacy scholars and practitioners from around the world, through a broad portfolio of activities and programmes that foster scholarship and research, and provide professional education and training to help our practitioners to build capacity for public diplomacy. We have also noticed in the academic world a growing interest in studying and researching public diplomacy, with growing representation of scholarly work in academic outlets. The Center is proud to play an important role in building the field of public diplomacy into a strong and sustainable facet of international affairs.

Half a century ago, the distinguished American diplomat Edmund Gullion defined “public diplomacy” to specifically denote co-ordinated governmental efforts with foreign publics. Obviously, the concept of public diplomacy has since broadened and is now far more extensive; it is no longer an activity that is unique to sovereign states, and the public dimension of diplomacy now involves a multitude of actors and networks. Indeed, as a mindset and a skill set, public diplomacy is needed not only in government but in business and civil society, as we enter a phase of having a far more fluid distributed international system.

Without getting into the wilderness of definition of public diplomacy, let us just say that the two pillars of public diplomacy work are policy advocacy and cultural diplomacy in nation-to-nation relations. Creating productive international relationships rests on some form of sustained understanding, and on there being some level of trust between nations and peoples. Trust is invariably a function of risk, and risk perception is heightened in times of grave uncertainty.

Many speakers at the Summit have spoken eloquently and passionately about culture and arts having a vital role to play, especially in these times, when we feel stressed politically, economically and environmentally. What is the fate of cultural relations and artistic exchanges in this age of anxiety, as we experience massive movement of trade, people, and ideas? Can culture really hold us together in a fracturing world?

Notwithstanding its tremendous benefits over the past two decades, globalisation has sharpened political and economic divides, thereby

heightening economic insecurity and cultural anxiety among many people. Of course, the movement of goods, information and people is nothing new; what are new are the speed, scope and scale of such movements in contemporary times. Clearly, some of us are exhausted by those changes, as we transition from a primarily monocultural consistence to an increasingly polycentric environment. Further, there is not only a disconnect between the elites and the general public—there is also division among elites about the nature and merits of trade migration and the flow of ideas and ideologies. It is now clear that the rise of assertive nationalism and nativism that we have seen in many parts of the world in recent times are due in large part to the negative fallout of globalisation.

Adding to those destabilising shifts is a crowded, fractured and transparent information environment, which has become part of our daily existence. Popular emotion and public opinion exert much greater constraints on policies and state action. The information cacophony, which includes plenty of misinformation and disinformation, has exacerbated digital credulity and digital distrust. To make matters worse, some of the political rhetoric and its excesses are deepening the public’s existential fear. As we navigate an increasingly volatile world and an international order that is under great stress, we should be very clear-eyed about the inevitable limitations of human nature and human imagination.

Here, I would like to draw on the writings of the influential American theologian and social commentator of the first part of the 20th century, Reinhold Niebuhr. His thesis of “Moral Man & Immoral Society”, which is the title of his book, basically states that although individuals might be moral in terms of considering interests other than their own in determining their outlook and conduct—even, on occasion, being altruistic by preferring the advantages of others to their own—such tendencies in behaviour are more difficult, if not impossible, for social groups such as nation states. He argued that human groups are generally incapable of seeing and understanding the interests of others as vividly as their own. Therefore, he wrote:

“For all the centuries of experience, men have not yet learned how to live together without compounding their vices and covering each other ‘with mud and with blood’.”

Although that is a rather pessimistic view of the human condition, Niebuhr was, of course, not simply resigned to such pessimism. Recognising our limitations and that there is no escape from social conflicts, he asked what can be done to save societies from those cycles of conflicts. His answer is straightforward: reduce them to a minimum by expanding social co-operation. To do

that, we need to develop the incentive and the capacity for co-operative behaviour, which is fundamentally about expanding the spaces of collective empathy.

Contemporary movements in trade, people and ideas bring tensions into our physical as well as our imagined spaces. Cultural contacts can be harmonious, mixing and mingling, but they can also be contentious and sometimes even violent. After all, our tastes and sensibilities across national lines and cultural lines are varied and can clash; nevertheless, such encounters should be, to cite the late journalist Christopher Hitchens, clashes about, not of, civilisations. Cultural relations and, sometimes, such clashes provide the opportunity for us to open up vistas of experiences, to negotiate differences and to adjust and accommodate each other's priorities.

The question then becomes this: does cultural and artistic exchange as part of the broader public diplomacy enterprise make us better communities and better citizens, or is the world of cultural exchange like a swarm of busy ants carrying grains of sand back and forth without anything truly significant being accomplished? That is both a normative and an empirical question. In the example in the beautiful presentation that we just heard, music and dance embody the two most elemental forms of human interaction or communication: the use of the voice and the use of the body. Some view the art as the consummate communication form that helps to expand the spaces of expression and empathy.

For us at CPD, it is an empirical question. We have just started a study to better capture and understand the value of cultural exchanges to local communities in the United States, and we are looking at the extent to which hosting cultural exchanges actually enhances local communities' cultural, social and civic capital, which we assume are, as resources, crucial for the preservation and vibrancy of our local communities. We are approaching this as a comparative analysis because we believe that it is far more fruitful and instructive to look at the so-called relative impact than to look at absolute impacts. Given current disruptive technologies and the nature of globalisation, building new skills and capabilities is necessary for organisations of cultural relations. To that end, we are developing professional educational modules in storytelling in order to create, for instance, social stories to enable practitioners to expand boundaries and to experiment with and innovate their practices.

I recently came across a media profile of a German chef who has achieved celebrity status in Italy as a creator of and innovator in Italian national cuisine. He came to my attention when he was quoted as saying that one needs

“to understand what it means to be a foreigner in order to ... make a difference in the world.”

When I thought about that, it made sense. There is no question: we now have more opportunities than ever to see and experience the world as a foreigner—as an outsider.

At the same time, it is also true that we are looking for relief in the face of mounting cultural anxiety being visited upon us as insiders. We hope that culture and the arts are a moderating force to help to release some of those tensions and to provide us with the cultural generosity to better identify with “the other”.

For all that, as a pessimistic optimist, I am convinced that there are other possibilities and prospects for public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy as preferred non-military means to advance peace and prosperity. Culture occupies a central role in global affairs—the challenge for us is to figure out how we can make an effort and take steps to ensure that those cultural relations and artistic exchanges are truly and meaningfully delivering the impact and results in our local communities, in order to help us to expand our spaces of co-operation. Thank you very much. [*Applause.*]

**The Presiding Officer:** Thank you very much, Jay. The first of our ministerial delegates is the Hon Maggie Barry ONZM. For many years, Maggie was one of New Zealand's radio and television broadcasters and she now serves as Minister for the Arts, Culture and Heritage in New Zealand. I ask Maggie to come and join us at the podium.

10:16

**Hon Maggie Barry ONZM (Minister for the Arts, Culture and Heritage, New Zealand):** E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e rau rangatira mā. Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa. In the words of New Zealand's ethnic people—the Maori people, our tangata whenua—greetings to you all, you important people from all around the world, here in this place. I welcome you all three times.

It has been an extraordinary few days and it is a privilege to be here. I thank Jonathan Mills for putting together such a stimulating programme, which also allows us to explore the options around participation and motivation. I hold three portfolios that I think are relevant to some of the themes that we have been exploring. I am the minister for seniors, although I am not quite one myself yet; I am the Minister for Conservation; and I am the Minister for the Arts, Culture and Heritage. To me, those three portfolios all fit a very similar theme. They are about exploring our nationhood—who we are. New Zealanders define ourselves through our natural flora and fauna. Our kiwi, our flightless



birds, are unique. They are ours and we are called Kiwis. That is how much we identify with a small, flightless bird. I am not sure what that says about us.

We are different from other people because we tell our stories in different ways. Our tangata whenua are closely involved with the fabric of our society and we are proudly different in the way that we sing, dance, perform and do our visual arts. Those are the things that make us different from you all. On the world stage, it is important for us to have that national identity. We are a changing society and we have a number of quirky elements that we are working on. I will share some of them with you.

Because I am Minister for Conservation, I pay attention to nature and to the balance of nature. At the heart of any thriving environment is a healthy ecology. I believe that the same applies to the arts and culture ecosystems. They too have an ecology that operates in much the same way as nature does. For the arts sector to thrive, there needs to be a genuine interconnection and relationship between the key elements and their environments. There is a mutual dependency on the ecosystem. For those various elements to survive, to be healthy and to function well, they all need each other. Help to nurture one element and all the others will benefit and be stronger; take away some vital ingredient and, because of that interdependency, it might all collapse.

For a sustainable environment, there needs to be collaboration and strong partnerships. To be honest, that is not always necessarily found within Government and ministries. Ministries often work in silos independently of each other and sometimes also in competition, and it takes determination and focus to encourage such bureaucratic cultures to integrate and be more seamless and open with each other. However, that is essential to a healthy ecology and, therefore, a healthy country.

Practicalities are important, of course, and we have to get them right. I am going to use the F-word here—funding. Funding is a necessary evil, which is an important thing to take note of and address. Yesterday, some of our youth representatives talked in a session about our preoccupation with numbers, which is somehow an unsavoury thing—I see that they are smiling happily—is it not? However, it was a good point and one that we need to think about. We cannot lose sight of the heart and soul of what do, but if we do not get the numbers right, we are at peril of having all else falter. It is therefore important to use leverage—another word that I have heard quite a few times at this Summit—to maximise the Crown funding and make the taxpayers' dollars go further, and for that to be matched so that we have

public-private partnerships, which we are open to. We need to be imaginative and creative about those things, and we have to get those fundamentals right.

For those of you who have not yet had the pleasure of visiting us in Aotearoa, New Zealanders—or Kiwis, as we call ourselves—are justifiably very proud of our native and indigenous cultures. You may be familiar with them through the Kapa Haka, the warlike dance that happens before the All Blacks' games, or you might have seen the Edinburgh Tattoo when Maori culture groups were performing—they have a similar energy and passion. Those cultures are very important to us, but we are a changing society and that change is happening quite rapidly and perhaps more rapidly than some people are ready for. With 39 per cent of its population having been born overseas, Auckland, our largest city, is now more ethnically diverse than Sydney, Los Angeles, London or even New York. Auckland has more than 200 ethnicities, speaking over 160 languages. Engaging people with accessible arts, culture, history and heritage helps create strong and resilient communities and knits together all those different cultures in a way that is meaningful to the people who live there.

One very clear example is the role that cultural participation continues to play in the recovery from the earthquakes that devastated Christchurch. They started in 2010 and continue to this day. We are known as the shaky isles and we feel a particular sadness and affinity with the tragic events in Italy this week. After the first earthquakes occurred in Christchurch and once people's basic needs had been met, they told us that what they most wanted were places to meet, either face to face or online, to share their stories and to experience events and activities that would lift their spirits, whether it was dancing on a makeshift Dance-O-Mat or accessing an open-air pavilion for music and films or even a temporary bowling green on an abandoned building site. People needed to get together and they needed the arts and culture to nurture them in a place that was important to them. They needed to heal, and the arts were a huge part of that.

We found that, for some time after the earthquakes, people were very reluctant to go into the traditional venues of theatres and cinemas, so the Christchurch arts sector took things to the streets and they had pop-up theatre and outdoor activities and events in public spaces that were far more inclusive than they used to be traditionally. That worked terrifically well. We must never lose sight of the fact that the arts are a powerful source of strength and fulfilment. A survey by our arts organisation, Creative New Zealand, found that 88 per cent of participants agreed that the arts are good for you, although not perhaps in the way that

spinach and broccoli are good for you. A society that speaks and thinks imaginatively and creatively is a society that can be innovative and adaptable socially, environmentally and economically.

Let us accept—I would be surprised if anyone in this audience argued otherwise—that the arts and culture are vehicles for progress. They create vibrant towns and cities, they are draw cards for businesses and tourists, and they create jobs and diplomatic and trade relationships. In New Zealand last year, for the first time, tourism overtook dairy as our greatest earner, which is a phenomenal shift. A lot of people came to New Zealand to see our landscapes and our culture and find out what was different about us.

Nearly three quarters of international visitors say that they come to New Zealand to experience our natural environment, so we have developed a program to get people out into the outdoors and explore New Zealand's national parks, coastlines and inner-city green spaces. We have called the programme, "healthy nature, healthy people". It actively encourages people to go out to the conservation estates and enjoy the physical and mental health benefits of contact with nature. Our partners include the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand and the Ministry of Health.

Research has estimated a saving for the health budget of NZ\$2.70 for every kilometre walked and NZ\$1.30 for every kilometre cycled. It is quite good to be able to measure the numbers sometimes and get that tangible evidence, so that we can prise money out of our wealthier ministries—and Health is right behind us. I am sure that if we were to put a value on participation in the arts and culture, it would be as significant.

Access is important, and it comes with its challenges; one in five New Zealanders has a disability. Arts Access Aotearoa facilitates "arts for all" networks around the country, to help to ensure that access is not left to chance. The networks encourage and incentivise performing arts companies, galleries, museums and all venues to include sign-interpreted performances and tours, audio descriptions for people who are blind or partially sighted, and workshops and relaxed performances for people with intellectual disabilities. An example is a bilingual show for deaf and hearing audiences, "At The End Of My Hands", which plays to sell-out audiences. It bridges the gap between people who are normal and people who have disabilities, making them the same in a way that is meaningful.

As the minister for seniors, my focus is on ensuring that, in our ageing population, New Zealanders continue to be healthy, active and connected as they age. Often, ageing is seen as somehow a cost to society; my ambition is to challenge that attitude. We will all live longer. At

home, our over-65 population will double within the next 20 years, and dementia rates will treble. Those are problems that we need to be able to plan for if we are to deal with them properly. We do not just want to live longer; we want to live meaningful lives and to be able to enjoy ourselves.

I loved David Leventhal and the Mark Morris Dance Group Dance for PD programme—it is a tremendous, wonderful thing. I do not know whether you know that at home we have the Hip Op-eration Crew, which is a group of dance performers who are all in their 80s—in fact, some are in their 90s. Half a dozen of them have dementia, and most of them need medications, Zimmer frames and quite a lot of assistance to live their daily lives. As we saw with David's example, when people put aside their aches and pains and get to the music and the rhythm of what they are doing, they really thrive and they achieve things they did not think they were capable of. We are talking about hip-hop, so we have people in their 90s who have green hair, wear chains and bling and have a bad-boy attitude. They stand up there and shake their booty, and they do tremendously well—I probably should have broken the rules, Jonathan, and brought a clip along with me. At every Hip Op-eration Crew event that I have ever been to, they have brought the house down. They are remarkable people, and even through the dementia the music touches them in a way that makes them move and means that they are no longer in that state in which they cannot remember their past and think about their future, so that they do the most valuable thing—something we should all do—which is to live in the moment. Combining dance and resonating with people's shared memories is something that works very well. Our Hip Op-eration Crew did very well in Las Vegas, winning awards and worldwide acclaim. They love every moment of that.

I could talk for a long time about these things and I know that there are other such initiatives—in opera, too; I acknowledge that. I believe that the most powerful way to bring in people who have been on the outside of society, such as homeless people and people with self-esteem issues, is by using culture, music and art.

In New Zealand—Aotearoa, the land of the long white cloud—we have a saying, in which we ask, "What is the most important thing?" The response is: "he tangata, he tangata, he tangata"—the people, the people, the people.

Thank you. [*Applause.*]

**The Presiding Officer:** Thank you, minister.

We will now hear from Mr Asaduzzaman Noor, from Bangladesh. Mr Noor is an actor, writer and director who has been involved in hundreds of stage, radio, television and film productions over

many years, and is now the Minister of Cultural Affairs in Bangladesh.

10:30

**Asaduzzaman Noor (Minister of Cultural Affairs, Bangladesh):** Honourable Presiding Officer, excellencies, distinguished guests and friends—a very good morning to you.

Bangladesh's culture has always been defined by its power to ensure participation; it is through the people's participation that our culture has endured. The culture of our fatherland has evolved through the ages. Our folk music, religious theatre, terracotta art and many other forms of culture are testament to the richness of our heritage. None of that would be possible without the participation of the everyday people of Bengal. It is not only the local artisans, musicians and theatre troupes who make our culture endure, but the grandmothers who tell our folk tales, the boatmen who sing songs of the river and the Bauls who travel across the countryside and sing about love for all creatures. All those countless contributors come together to make the culture of Bangladesh what it is today. In more recent years, the huge crowds that gather at music festivals, fairs and new year celebrations work as examples of mass participation in our cultural activities. In turn, it is their participation that ensures the diversity and durability of our culture.

Long ago, in 1971, I was a regular performer in one of the pioneering theatre groups that were involved in the revival of Bangladeshi theatre in the early years of independence. Our group staged translated versions of the plays of Bertolt Brecht, among others, which had strong social and political messages. The plays became immensely popular in Bangladesh, with massive audience support. The use of storytelling techniques, songs and direct addresses to the audience energised people. The socialist messages resonated with the audience's expectations of social, economic and political change, and we drew immense satisfaction from interacting with them.

Theatre in Bangladesh is a prime example of the important relationship between culture and participation. Bangladesh has experimented with different varieties of theatre from folk to absurd, through classical and others. Of course, we have our own traditional theatre forms that predate by 1,000 years the arrival of European proscenium theatre in the late 18th century, such as jatra pala and gombhira. All those continue to be important parts of our local folk culture and depend on the close involvement of audiences for their effectiveness. Theatre has also been used by non-government organisations to spread messages about development issues including education, health and nutrition and women's empowerment.

Similarly, folk music in Bangladesh is also hugely influenced by audience participation and interaction with the musicians, and often draws on important social and cultural issues for inspiration.

Nakshi kantha, which is a traditional craft of stitching blankets, is also wholly dependent on participation, since it is traditionally meant to tell the stories of the lives of rural women, which are woven into the material through the artisans' workmanship.

Bangladesh also has a thriving arts industry, and many up and coming artists are not only experimenting with different styles and important commentary on various social issues, but are interacting with art dealers through their work and are making audience participation an important focus of their art.

In recent times, participation has again been in focus as newer demands for education and entertainment begin to be felt in the wake of emergent problems and conflicts including an insidious drugs culture and religious extremism, both of which primarily target the youth. The spread of culture is considered by many educators and psychologists to be an important antidote. All over Bangladesh, children and youth are being encouraged to engage in cultural activities with persuasive messages about the dangers of extremist beliefs.

Physical disabilities and differently challenging situations such as autism have also been the focus of many new-generation works of art. Besides that, many social, health and other messages are now seen to be more effective if they are given to children from their early education days, and culture is felt to be a means of achieving that end. Educators have also started to involve marginalised children in cultural activities through, for example, theatre groups as a way of bringing their daily struggles to a wider audience.

At the 2014 Edinburgh International Cultural Summit, the dynamic discussion on the three themes—values and measurements, citizen culture and advocacy and identity—contributed to the idea of creating a safe platform through culture as a means of building a more open, inclusive and stable society in Bangladesh. Following the discussion at the previous Summit, the Bangladeshi Ministry of Cultural Affairs partnered with the British Council on a pioneering project called "A Different Romeo and Juliet", which was performed by Bangladeshi people with disabilities. This groundbreaking theatre project, which commemorated the 400 years since Shakespeare's death, was the first of its kind in Bangladesh and has opened a new horizon for policy makers and emerging cultural leaders to use art as a medium to create an inclusive society.

That unique project also showed the power of culture to open dialogue and debate among people.

Through that work, we have learned the crucial role that culture can play in spreading messages of inclusivity to wider society, and it has raised awareness of the bigger challenge of creating accessibility in public and private establishments. Now that Bangladesh has produced such a successful example, it is time to mainstream those initiatives to create a sustainable platform for a democratic and pluralistic society. This year's theme for the Summit—how culture can build resilient communities—is also very timely in its interpretation of the vital role that culture can play in the life of any successful community.

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs is also working with the British Council on a project that is aimed at transforming public libraries across Bangladesh and creating community-led cultural spaces. However, although I can make a strong claim that mass cultural participation still exists in Bangladesh, and that culture is a crucial medium for ensuring an inclusive and pluralistic society, we cannot deny the disconnect between cultural education and the wider education system of Bangladesh. As more and more students are pressured to achieve top grades and get into good universities, cultural activities are beginning to take a back seat in their priorities. The constant cycle of school and extra lessons that students are forced to endure leaves them drained at the end of the day and gives them very little room to engage in cultural activities. In fact, forcing students to study and, in many cases, to memorise textbooks can have negative psychological impacts, thus making them even more susceptible to developing antisocial tendencies and being exploited for radicalisation. We must act at once to stop the constant pressure and the rote memorisation to pass standardised tests, and instead acknowledge the diversity of students' needs and the important role of culture in ensuring an holistic education.

Culture can also play a crucial role in combating terrorism—not just in Bangladesh, but all over the world—by spreading the ideals of pluralism, secularism and tolerance. Our focus should not be on creating a mass of A-plus students, but on creating a mass of progressive and open-minded citizens of the future. It is only by focusing on culture, by ensuring participation and diversity at all levels of society through well-rounded education systems, by mainstreaming activities at local, regional and national levels, by partnering with local and international cultural organisations and through cultural policy that we can move towards the creation of a progressive and enlightened global society.

Thank you very much. [*Applause.*]

**The Presiding Officer:** Thank you very much, Minister Noor.

Following Michael Gowan's welcome contribution yesterday, we will end this morning's session with a presentation from three of our young delegates from Youth Arts Voice Scotland: Blair Boyle, Emma Ruse and Daniel McCormick.

10:40

**Daniel McCormick (Youth Arts Voice Scotland):** Presiding Officer, ministers, ambassadors, honoured guests and ladies and gentlemen, I first want to thank every person here for this incredibly inspiring and motivating three days that I am sure I will treasure for many years to come. It has been thought provoking and exciting. I thank Jonathan Mills for inviting us and allowing us to be here, and I thank Faye Harland, the director of the Summit youth programme, for making it incredible.

So what is Youth Arts Voice Scotland, who are we and what do we do? We are a group of young people and we were established in 2014 as a national youth advisory group for Scotland's first and only national youth arts strategy, which is called "Time to Shine". It is a unique policy that places young people at the heart of the decision-making process not only locally and regionally, but nationally at strategic policy level. We work closely with Young Scot, Creative Scotland and the Scottish Government.

Who are we? As I said, when we were established we were a group of about 15 young people aged from 14 to 22 from the Western Isles right down to the Borders, so we transcended geographical location. We have three key themes that are replicated in the youth strategy: participation, provision and progression. The vision of the time to shine strategy was that in 10 years' time, which is now eight years away, Scotland would be a world leader in youth arts, creativity and innovation. Youth Arts Voice Scotland's vision is that all young people in Scotland, regardless of who they are, where they are from, their background, economic situation and so on, have equal access to and opportunity in art and cultural activities.

I now pass over to my peer, Emma, who will talk about some of the more concrete and tangible work that we have done. Again, I thank you all. [*Applause.*]

10:43

**Emma Ruse (Youth Arts Voice Scotland):** One of the first things that we set up when we started in 2014 was the nurturing talent fund, which is a fund for young people aged 14 to 20 to create their own projects. The fund was entirely

created and led by us, with assistance from Creative Scotland. We sit on the board to assess applications and we have given out thousands upon thousands of pounds to young people to create their own projects and—to be honest—to have their dreams realised. They do things such as rent out gallery spaces and create arts programmes. Honestly, it is really inspiring to see all the work that is going on in Scotland.

Through “Time to Shine” we have created, with Creative Scotland, nine youth arts hubs across Scotland, from the Highlands to central Edinburgh. The youth arts hubs and all the “Time to Shine” projects have had more than 40,000 participants—which I am sure everyone here will agree is an amazing number.

As some of you will know if you were at the session that I was at yesterday afternoon, numbers are not everything. I do not think that we can measure the full impact of “Time to Shine” or put a tangible number on how much the strategy has done for the young people of Scotland. Not everyone will know its name, and not everyone will have said, “I must Google this ‘Time to Shine’ thing that I’ve been hearing about”, but young people will have been affected by the strategy in the smallest ways. Whether they have used the print studio at Out of the Blue, which is Edinburgh’s arts hub, or walked past a poster in the street and thought, “Oh, that looks cool”, they will have engaged, and it is amazing to be able to engage so many young people.

I think that I am preaching to the choir, because everyone in this room believes in the importance of the arts and culture, but let me ask a question: do we all agree on the importance of young people? Having seen your response to the youth delegation at the Summit, I think that we are definitely making headway. I am looking at the young people who are sitting to delegates’ left and I can see some of the most amazing, passionate and intelligent people. I might be a tad biased in saying that, but I think that those people are the future, and I think that in two years or 10 years, some of them will be sitting where the delegates are sitting and making important decisions.

I am really grateful for the invitation to come here to show you what the youth of Scotland—and every country—can do. I invite you to connect with your young people after the Summit, because through “Time to Shine” and Youth Arts Voice Scotland, and with the help of the Summit, we have shown what Scotland’s young people—and young people all across the world—can do.

I will pass you over to my colleague Blair Boyle, who will tell you a little more about “Time to Shine”. [Applause.]

10:46

**Blair Boyle (Youth Arts Voice Scotland):** Thank you. Over the past few years we have experienced the incredible passion of young people. If you do not currently work with young people, go and do it, because it will change your life and how you work.

Two years in, we are approaching our first biennial conference, the “Time to Shine” Convention, at which we will showcase and celebrate the work that young people—not us, Creative Scotland or Young Scot—have been participating in over the past year. Those young people have put their hearts and passion into everything that they have done. I cannot wait for the convention—I am sure that Daniel and Emma feel the same. Basically, it will be about showing off. The young people have done so much, so it will be good to show what they have done.

We recently evaluated the implementation and effectiveness of “Time to Shine”. We are two years into a 10-year strategy, so we have eight years to go: we are just getting started. There is so much to do, but we are getting there. Many things became clear in the evaluation, one of which relates to participation and—this is ironic—numbers. As Maggie Barry from New Zealand said, numbers are obviously important for what you do, but I think that the ways in which they are important can be changed. When we want to measure something, we often slap a number on it—1,1,1—which measures the width and not the depth, but to measure something’s true potential and value we need to get away from that. When we measure by width and not depth, we reduce a human being to the number 1 and lose their true value. When we show width, we have nothing to gain; we just aim to involve more young people. When we measure depth, we have something and everything to play for, because we aim to go deeper and improve what we have. For me, that is so much more important—it is about getting quality rather than quantity. That is one of the things that we have learned from our evaluation that I wanted to share with you.

This morning, Matthew Peacock talked about the opportunity to be defined by our achievements and not our needs. Young people have so much potential; I think that we can be defined by everything that we can do. I would love to share that idea with you and urge you to take advantage of it. We are here now, but in 10 or 15 years we will be where you are, so why not use us now to improve things?

The people in this room have the opportunity to change lives. As a young person, I urge you to be willing to let us change your minds before you change lives. [Applause.]

**The Presiding Officer:** I thank Daniel, Emma, Blair and all our speakers for their contributions in this morning's plenary session, which I now close so that we can get into our discussion groups.

*Session closed at 10:50.*

