



RECOMMENDED READINGS

From this *optional* reading on cultural equity and cultural democracy, we hope you will find some thought provoking choices to deepen your understanding and exploration of issues, ideas, and ways to advance cultural equity and cultural democracy. Items with an asterisk are by preconference presenters or are about their work. This is not an exhaustive list and will be added to before and after the preconference. **We welcome your suggestions for additions!** Send them to: Alicia Gregory, agregory@artsusa.org

Equity / Cultural Equity / Access

[Figuring the Plural: Needs and Supports of Canadian and US Ethnocultural Arts Organizations](#)

Mina Para Matlon, Ingrid Van Haastrecht, Kaitlyn Wittig Mengüç (School of the Art Institute of Chicago/Art Institute of Chicago & National Endowment for the Arts, 2014)

Figuring the Plural compiles existing research and develops new research on the characteristics, needs, and support systems of ethnocultural arts organizations in the United States and Canada. The authors conclude the report with 32 recommendations for better supporting ethnocultural arts organizations.

[Leading the Charge: Diversity & Inclusion](#)

Theatre Communications Group

TCG's strategic plan includes a multi-year, six-point Diversity & Inclusion Initiative to transform the national theatre field into a more inclusive and diverse community. These efforts are focused on racial and cultural diversity, with the understanding that steps must also be made to further diversify the field in many areas, such as gender parity. Some recent initiatives include a [Diversity & Inclusion blog salon](#) and a literature review of critical thinking about diversity and inclusion.

[Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide](#)

City of Seattle (Racial and Social Justice Initiative, 2009)

This guide, developed for use by City of Seattle staff, serves as a basis for training on inclusive public engagement. The guide includes an overview of the racial and social justice implications of public engagement, strategies for inclusive engagement, and tools for developing and implementing an inclusive public engagement plan.

[Creative Placemaking and the Politics of Belonging and Dis-Belonging](#)

Roberto Bedoya (Arts in a Changing America, 2012)

In this article, Bedoya examines the politics of creative placemaking and asserts that, to acknowledge the importance of belonging is to also acknowledge the discomfort—and even violence—of dis-belonging. Dis-belonging occurs through acts of gentrification, racism, and speculation culture, which often occur under the name of “civic revitalization,” but in reality betray the democratic ideals of a just, civil society.

Barry’s Blog: [More on the Cultural Equity Discussion](#) (2011) and [GIA Wrap up & Thoughts on Equity/Racial/Social Justice Issue](#) (2014)

Barry Hessenius (Westaf, 2011 & 2014)

In two blog posts Hessenius reflects on the topics of cultural inclusivity and equitable funding in the arts, and urges arts managers, leaders, and philanthropists to take bold steps to achieve arts access for everyone. He suggests that, “[w]e need to move away from the dispassionate and detached position of observer to one where we voluntarily and eagerly move as committed *activists* to change - not in the long term, but now.”

*** [Multi Meets Poly: Multiculturalism and Polyculturalism Go on a First Date](#)**

Jamil Khoury, A. George Bajalia, Gordon Chow, Virginia Lee Marie Martinez (Silk Road Rising, 2015)

Silk Road Rising’s 30-minute film, *Multi Meets Poly: Multiculturalism and Polyculturalism Go on a First Date*, is a “thought provoking and humorous reflection on the theoretical and practical differences between two powerful social ideas: multiculturalism and polyculturalism.” The personifications of Multiculturalism and Polyculturalism interrogate, challenge, and explore American interpretations of pluralism, cultural exchange and diversity.

[Dance Community Conversation: Diversity and Equity – Conversation #2](#)

(Audience Architects, 2012)

Notes from a discussion on Diversity and Equity in Chicago’s Dance community, hosted by Audience Architects and attended by 30 members of the community.

[Evaluation: Rockefeller Foundation Program, NYC Cultural Innovation Fund](#)

The Rockefeller Foundation & Helicon Collaborative, 2013

Between 2007 and 2012, The Rockefeller Foundation’s NYC Cultural Innovation Fund granted \$163 million to support 99 efforts to leverage culture and innovation to achieve equity and sustainability. This evaluation report concludes that the grants “advanced understanding of the need for cultural innovation in New York City”; “expanded dialogue between cultural organizations and their communities”; and “encouraged a more disruptive kind of cultural innovation.”

[*National Equity Atlas](#)

Policy Link & USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, 2014

The National Equity Atlas is a first-of-its-kind data and policy tool for the community leaders and policymakers who are working to build a new economy that is equitable, resilient, and prosperous.

[21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge](#)

Dr. Eddie Moore and Debby Irving (Food Solutions New England)

The authors present a 21-day challenge to start “understanding white privilege as a powerful lens into racism’s complexities.” They offer a list of resources to read, watch, connect to, and engage with in order to “build your racial justice muscle.”

[Arts x Culture x Social Justice Network](#)

The Art X Culture X Social Justice Network is based on the power of art and culture to advance social justice by inspiring collective action across identities, issues, sectors, geographies, and power imbalances. It works to bring together artists, activists, cultural bearers, and philanthropists.

[Racial Equity and Social Justice Collection](#)

Grantmakers in the Arts

A collection of electronic resources on racial equity and social justice compiled by Grantmakers in the Arts.

[Arts and Social Justice](#)

Grantmakers in the Arts

A database of resources on arts and social justice.

Ecosystem, Community Development, Creative Placekeeping

[*Seeing Beyond, Activating Ourselves](#)

Roberta Uno (GIA Reader, Winter 2015)

In *Seeing Beyond, Activating Ourselves* Roberta Uno asks how we might “recognize and learn from public space that is already activated, functioning in a type of parallel universe, off the radar of philanthropy and the art world, yet possibly some of the most vivid and exciting examples of a potential creative future.” Uno invites readers to look beyond the “conventional modes of arts and production and consumption” to see the dynamic public space that is “embedded in how people live.”

[*Economic Development vs. Cultural Equity](#)

Edwin Torres (GIA Reader, Winter 2012)

Using as an example The Soul of Brooklyn project led by the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts, Torres discusses the ways in which philanthropy can invest its grant dollars to support culture while also creating targeted economic development for those who need it most.

[Up from the Roots: Economic and Cultural Equity in Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts: Findings from a Series of Roundtable Discussions](#)

Tom Borrup with Caron Atlas (Arts & Democracy, 2011)

This report presents a series of key findings from roundtable discussions held in several cities across the United States that focused on understanding the growth of “naturally occurring cultural districts.” The report examines both the successes and challenges related to this type of cultural district and presents recommendations distilled from the roundtables. The Appendix offers many examples of naturally occurring cultural districts.

[Spatial Justice: A Frame for Reclaiming Our Rights to Be, Thrive, Express, and Connect](#)

Bailey, Kenneth, Lori Lobenstine, and Kiara Nagel (The Design Studio for Social Innovation & The Praxis Project)

This article provides an in-depth examination of special justice and related policies and practices that help ensure people’s rights to thrive, express, and connect in community spaces. It discusses the multiple potentials of public space--for protest, dance, occupation, and play--and provides practical approaches and exercises to imagine new types of space and what laws will enable these uses.

[*Ten Thousand Ripples: Public Art, Peace and Placemaking](#)

Changing Worlds, 2013

Through the Ten Thousand Ripples (TTR) project, artist Indira Johnson worked with community organizations in nine Chicago-area neighborhoods to create art in public spaces. The project was rooted in the belief “that community art should contribute to daily life, and that the arts have the power to activate civic engagement, ignite creative ambitions, and foster safe forums for residents to talk.”

Cultural Participation / Cultural Democracy

[*Cultural Democracy: The Arts, Community, and the Public Purpose](#)

James Bau Graves (University of Illinois Press, 2015)

Cultural Democracy examines the dynamics of how traditional and grassroots cultures may survive and thrive and what we can do to provide them opportunities equal to those of dominant Eurocentric culture.

[Informal Arts: Finding Cohesion, Capacity, and Other Cultural Benefits in Unexpected Places](#)

Alaka Wali, Rebecca Severson and Mario Longoni (The Chicago Center for Arts Policy at Columbia College, 2002)

Informal Arts: Finding Cohesion, Capacity and Other Cultural Benefits in Unexpected Places is a report on a two-year study conducted at the University of Chicago investigating adult participation in the informal arts. The study found “substantial evidence that the informal arts are an important reservoir of social capital, significant for life-long-learning, building civic engagement, and strengthening communities.”

[*Making Meaningful Connections: Characteristics of Arts Groups that Engage New and Diverse Participants](#)

Holly Sidford, Alexis Frasz, Marcelle Hinand (The James Irvine Foundation & Helicon Collaborative, 2014)

Making Meaningful Connections offers an initial framework of key organizational characteristics for cultural institutions that are genuinely engaging participants who reflect their communities' changing demographics. The report presents findings related to the ways in which organizations can create and sustain relationships with diverse participants.

[Mapping Cultural Participation in Chicago](#)

Robert LaLonde, Colm O'Muircheartaigh, Julia Perkins, Diane Grams, Ned English, D. Carroll Joynes (Cultural Policy Center at the University of Chicago & The Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, 2006)

Mapping Cultural Participation in Chicago presents findings from a University of Chicago Cultural Policy Center study on arts participation in the Chicagoland area, including actual neighborhood cultural participation maps. The study serves as a baseline of audience participation and addresses critical questions about minority participation in the arts.

[There's Nothing Informal About it: Participatory Arts within the Cultural Ecology of Silicon Valley](#)
Maribel Alvarez, Ph.D. and Lisa van Diggelen (cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley, 2005)

This book examines key messages, themes, and attitudes related to activities of art practitioners, focusing on experiences that advance direct involvement and artistic creation by a broad range of people not conventionally considered artists.

Race and Representation

[*Steppenwolf's 'This Is Modern Art' Tagged with Controversy](#)

Chloe Riley (American Theater, 2015)

When two major Chicago theatre critics questioned the morality of Steppenwolf's *This is Modern Art*, which follows a graffiti crew, it ignited a city-wide debate about race, class, privilege, and the representation of young people.

[*Establishing Cultural Norms: Our Role and Responsibility](#)

Sarah Bellamy, Theater Communications Group

Bellamy asks readers to consider the role theatrical productions like *Miss Saigon* and the *Scottsboro Boys* play in propagating harmful stereotypes; something she suggests is equivalent to an "arsenal of cultural warfare." Bellamy argues that such shows "inculcate more and new people into the clan of the willfully ignorant, unconsciously consuming controlling narratives that continue to influence public discourse on race, class, gender, sexuality, and difference."

[What We Talk About When We Talk About Race](#)

Ian David Moss (Createquity, 2013)

In *What We Talk About When We Talk About Race*, Moss explores the “kaleidoscopic, maddening, shame-inducing complexity” of race relations and the ways in which cultural institutions can participate in a conversation about the underlying factors that perpetuate racism.

Rap on Race

James Baldwin and Margaret Mead (Laurel, 1973)

Rap on Race is a transcript of a conversation that took place between celebrated author, James Baldwin, and acclaimed anthropologist, Margaret Mead, in 1970. The candid conversation explored issues of race and society that remain timely today.

Philanthropy and Cultural Equity

[*Racial Equity in Arts Philanthropy: Statement of Purpose](#)

Grantmakers in the Arts, 2015

In 2015, Grantmakers in the Arts board of directors approved this statement of purpose for their work in racial equity in arts philanthropy to increase arts funding for ALAANA (African, Latino(a), Asian, Arab, and Native American) artists, arts organizations, children, and adults.

[Fusing, Arts, Culture, and Social Change](#)

Holly Sidford (National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, 2011)

Sidford argues that more foundation funding in the arts should directly benefit lower-income communities, people of color and disadvantaged populations, broadly defined, and that more resources should be allocated to expand the role of arts and culture in addressing the inequalities that challenge our communities.

[Advancing Equity in Arts and Cultural Grantmaking: Perspectives from Five Funders](#)

Grantmakers in the Arts (*GIA Reader*, Winter 2012)

This collective essay written by representatives from five arts and culture grant making organizations responds to “a funding typology [that] includes five pathways for change” suggested in Holly Sidford’s [Fusing, Arts, Culture, and Social Change](#) report. These funders dig deep into examples of programs and philanthropic organizations that are leading the way toward a more equitable cultural philanthropic community.

[Paying Attention to White Culture and Privilege: A Missing Link to Advancing Racial Equity](#)

Gita Gulatee-Partee, Maggie Potapchuk (The Foundation Review, 2014)

In *Paying Attention to White Culture and Privilege*, Gulatee-Partee and Potapchuk argue that focusing on white culture and privilege is an often overlooked but critical component of effective racial equity change processes; that this work can be challenging in some predictable ways; and that these challenges can be mitigated with some intentional tools.