Creative PLACEMAKING

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

A White Paper for The Mayors' Institute on City Design, a leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the United States Conference of Mayors and American Architectural Foundation.

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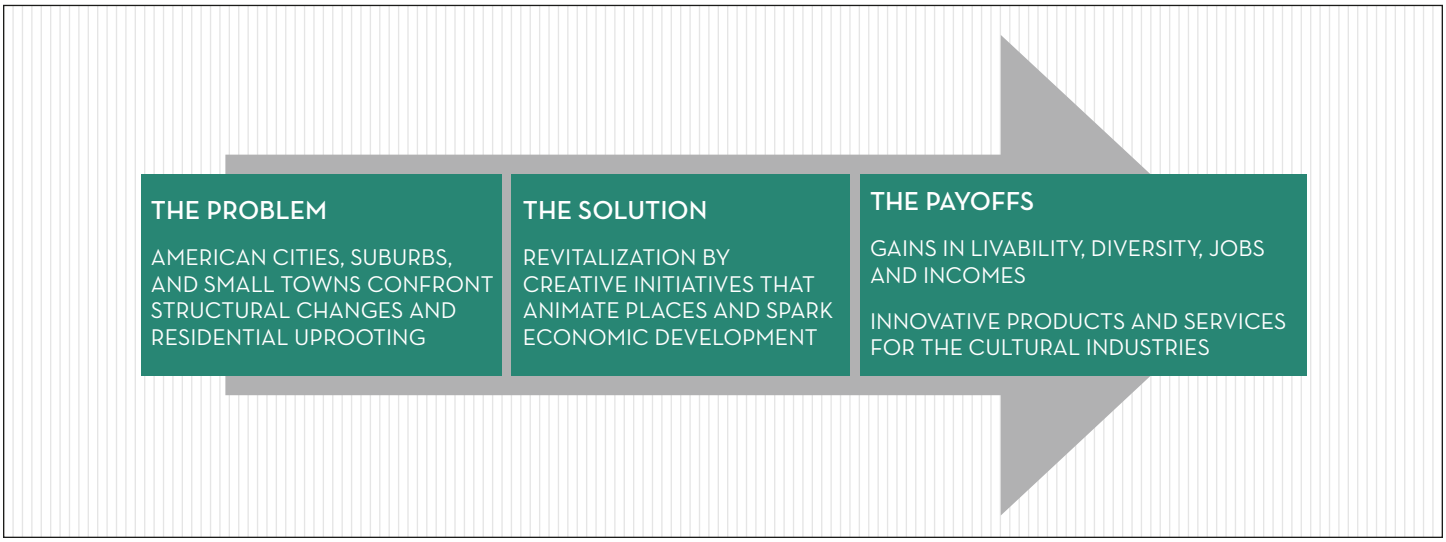
CREATIVE PLACEMAKING: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired.

In turn, these creative locales foster entrepreneurs and cultural industries that generate jobs and income, spin off new products and services, and attract and retain unrelated businesses and skilled workers. Together, creative placemaking's livability and economic development outcomes have the potential to radically change the future of American towns and cities.

Instead of a single arts center or a cluster of large arts and cultural institutions, contemporary creative placemaking envisions a more decentralized portfolio of spaces acting as creative crucibles. In each, arts and culture exist cheek-by-jowl with private sector export and retail businesses and mixed-income housing, often occupying buildings and lots that had been vacant and under-used. In large cities, many such hubs reflect the ethnic or historical character of place and invite residents and visitors alike across porous boundaries to visit, patronize, and enjoy. In smaller towns, traditional cultural practices and landscapes are transformed into distinctive cultural centers and festivals that revive emptying downtowns and attract regional visitors. Large cultural institutions, often inspired by their smaller counterparts, are increasingly engaging in active placemaking.

This white paper summarizes two decades of creative American placemaking, drawing on original economic research and case studies of pathbreaking initiatives in large and small cities, metropolitan to rural, as well as published accounts. The case studies stretch from Providence, Rhode Island, to Los Angeles, California, and



CREATIVE ECONOMIES HOST

- 2 million artists
- 3.6 million cultural workers
- 4.9 million cultural industry jobs

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING FOSTERS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Recirculates residents' incomes locally at a higher rate
- Re-uses vacant and underutilized land, buildings, and infrastructure
- Creates jobs in construction, local businesses, and cultural activity
- Expands entrepreneurial ranks of artists and designers
- Trains the next generation of cultural workers
- Attracts and retains non-arts-related businesses and skills

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING FOSTERS AMERICAN LEADERSHIP IN GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE INDUSTRIES

- Movies
- Broadcasting
- Publishing
- News media
- Musical recordings and video
- Social media
- Advertising
- Design services
- Architecture
- Video games

CASES OF CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

- Three Cleveland west-side theatres, one owned by a community development corporation, lead the redevelopment of a commercial corridor as Gordon Square Arts District.
- Buffalo's Mayor and a non-profit arts developer transform a vacant auto plant into artist studios and housing, infusing the neighborhood with creative and economic activity.
- Portland's new transit stations incorporate artwork that reflects distinctive neighborhoods and encourages ridership.
- San José's 01SJ Biennial marries art and technology to generate new products, bring people downtown, and showcase the City's diversity.

from Arnaudville, Louisiana, and Fond du Lac, Minnesota, to Seattle, Washington. Each reveals a distinctive strategy that succeeded when initiators built partnerships across sectors, missions, and levels of government, leveraging funds from diverse sources and programs.

Creative placemaking serves livability, diversity, and economic development goals. Livability outcomes include heightened public safety, community identity, environmental quality, increased affordable housing and workplace options for creative workers, more beautiful and reliable transportation choices, and increased collaboration between civic, non-profit, and for-profit partners. Economic development quickens because arts and cultural investments help a locality capture a higher share of expenditures from local income. Instead of traveling elsewhere for entertainment and culture, or going to a big-box retailer or shopping mall, residents are patrons of local talent and venues, earnings that re-circulate at a higher rate in the local economy. Re-using vacant space generates local property and sales tax revenues that can be devoted to streets, lighting, sanitation, greenery, and police and fire. Additional jobs and incomes are generated in construction, retail businesses, and arts and cultural production. New businesses, in the creative industries and others, are attracted to these communities.

Place has always been important for the emergence of new products, industries, and jobs. We find that creative places are cultural industry crucibles where people, ideas, and organizations come together, generating new products, industries, jobs, and American exports. They nurture entrepreneurs and expand the ranks of self-employed artists and designers who market their creations far afield. Training grounds for area youth, they incubate the next generation of creative workers and entrepreneurs. Because jobs increasingly follow people, rather than vice versa, they draw and retain other businesses and workers to their rich, lively, and diverse environs.[1]

As cultural industry incubators, creative places make valuable contributions to the national economy. More than 2 million Americans support themselves as artists, and the ranks of cultural workers exceed 3.8 million, or almost 3% of the nation's workforce. Many are entrepreneurs, some employ others; 65% of writers, 57% of visual artists, and 41% of musicians are self-employed.

Artists and related cultural workers provide the core expertise for American cultural industries, supporting close to 5 million jobs. These industries—the performing arts, movies, television, broadcasting, sound recording, video games, design, advertising, publishing, tourism—are among our most competitive internationally, producing billions of dollars in export earnings.

Creative placemakers confront daunting challenges. Many have stumbled along the way. Others have been slowed down or suffer growing pains. We asked leaders of successful efforts about the challenges they faced, how they met them, and what lessons they learned. In addition to overcoming fiscal challenges stemming from the Great Recession, many creative placemakers have navigated similar obstacles, namely: difficulties in creating partnerships, countering skepticism on the part of communities and public leaders, assembling adequate financing, clearing regulatory hurdles, ensuring long-term maintenance and sustainability, avoiding displacement and gentrification, documenting progress, and developing performance metrics. These insights are as important as their achievements for informing policy and encouraging other communities.

In the United States, creative placemaking operates at all geographic scales and with a diverse array of initiators and partners. We identify six components of a successful strategy, drawn from in-depth interviews. Each effort starts with an entrepreneurial initiator; demonstrates a commitment to place and its distinctive character; mobilizes public will, both in local government and the citizenry; attracts private sector

CHALLENGES FOR CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

- Forging partnerships
- Countering community skepticism
- Assembling adequate financing
- Clearing regulatory hurdles
- Ensuring maintenance and sustainability
- Avoiding displacement and gentrification
- Developing metrics of performance

SUCCESSFUL CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

- Prompted by an initiator with innovative vision and drive
- Tailors strategy to distinctive features of place
- Mobilizes public will
- Attracts private sector buy-in
- Enjoys support of local arts and cultural leaders
- Builds partnerships across sectors, missions, and levels of government

support, either from cultural industries or place developers or both; wins the active participation of arts and cultural leaders; and succeeds in building partnerships across sectors (for-profit, non-profit, government, and community), missions (e.g., cultural affairs, economic and workforce development, transportation, housing, planning, environment, and health), and levels of government (local, state, and federal).

Our research finds that through creative placemaking, arts and culture make substantial contributions to local economic development, livability, and cultural industry competitiveness. These contributions have not been given their due in public policy. Many city and small-town leaders are beginning to understand these connections. Some are modeling their initiatives on pathbreakers elsewhere, tailoring them to their own distinctive assets and challenges. At the state and federal levels, politicians, policymakers, and agency heads see the potential for arts and cultural activities to improve the effectiveness of their missions in transportation, housing, workforce development, health care, environmental remediation, and education. Exemplary cases of creative placemaking suggest that a collaborative policy platform can be developed across agencies, levels of government and public/non-profit/private sector organizations. This platform should be constructed from evidence on what works and where, and it should include evaluation from the start.

Arts and culture at this historic juncture are proving their power as economic and social catalysts. Through smart collaborations with other sectors—government, private business, foundations—they are creating opportunities for rejuvenation and economic development, anchored in and tailored to diverse communities. The arts can be a fulcrum for the creative transformation of American cities. ▲

[1] Ann Markusen and Greg Schrock, "The Artistic Dividend: Urban Artistic Specialization and Economic Development Implications," *Urban Studies* 43, no. 10 (2006): 1661-1686; Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002).

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Summer Performance Series, Cleveland Public Theatre

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2008-024: Taste of Summer © 2008 City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program/ Ann Northrup and Reentry Workers.

ANN MARKUSEN, Principal, Markusen Economic Research Services

Ann Markusen holds a PhD and MS in Economics from Michigan State University with fields of expertise in urban and regional economics, economic development, public finance, and industrial organization. An expert on urban and regional economic development, she has testified before Congress and served as President of the North American Regional Science Association, Brookings Economic Policy Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations Senior Fellow, and Member of the Presidential Commission on Offsets in International Trade. Markusen won the William Alonso Memorial Prize for Innovative Work in Regional Science (2006) and the Walter Isard Award for Outstanding Scholarly Achievement (1996). In 2010-11, she is serving as the Fulbright Distinguished Chair at the MacIntosh School of Architecture's Glasgow Urban Lab, where she is conducting a US/UK comparative study of creative cities.

Markusen has published more than a dozen books, include *Reining in the Competition for Capital* (2007), *From Defence to Development* (2003), *Arming the Future: A Defense Industry for the 21st Century* (1999), *Second Tier Cities* (1999), *Trading Industries, Trading Regions* (1993), *Dismantling the Cold War Economy* (1992), *The Rise of the Gunbelt* (1991), *Regions: The Economics and Politics of Territory* (1987), *High Tech America* (1986), and *Profit Cycle, Oligopoly and Regional Development* (1985).

Markusen's recent work focuses on urban revitalization, particularly on the contributions of arts and culture, human capital, and public policy. Her recent publications include:

- "Arts and Culture in Urban and Regional Planning: A Review and Research Agenda" *(Journal of Planning Education and Research, 2010)*
- *Los Angeles: America's Artist Super-City* (2010, Center for Cultural Innovation)
- Native Artists: Livelihoods, Resources, Space, Gifts (2009, The McKnight Foundation)
- *San José Creative Entrepreneur Project: Artists' Resource and Space Study* (2008) and *Final Report and Recommendations* (2009, Center for Cultural Innovation and City of San José)
- Artist Data User Guide (2008, Leveraging Investments in Creativity) exploring the demographics of state and metro artists from 2000 Census data
- *Crossover: How Artists Build Careers across Commercial, Non-profit and Community Work* (2006, The James Irvine Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and Leveraging Investments in Creativity)
- *Artists' Centers: Evolution and Impact on Careers, Neighborhoods and Economics* (2006, The McKnight Foundation)

Markusen has given keynote addresses on the creative city and the roles of artists and arts and culture in urban revitalization in Europe (Finland, Germany, France, UK), Australia, Brazil, Japan, South Korea, Canada, and in many cities and smaller towns around the US.

Markusen is a frequent advisor to mayors and city councils, state governments, and the federal government. She has worked for Chicago Mayor Harold Washington's Steel Industry Task Force, the Michigan House of Representatives as Staff Economist, and the Government Accountability Office in Washington. She is a widely sought public speaker across the US and internationally on economic development. Markusen has held professorships of three to ten years each at University of Colorado, University of California Berkeley, Northwestern University, Rutgers University, and University of Minnesota, teaching in the field of economic development. Her publications can be downloaded from her website at http: www.hhh.umn.edu/projects/prie.

ANNE GADWA, Principal, Metris Arts Consulting

Anne Gadwa is principal of Metris Arts Consulting, which provides data, analysis, and planning support to help communities strengthen the arts and help arts activity strengthen communities. An experienced researcher, Gadwa holds a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs and a B.A. from Oberlin College. Gadwa has authored major studies and journal articles, including:

- *How Artist Space Matters* (Metris Arts Consulting for Artspace Projects, 2010), a pathbreaking study of the impacts of three artist live/work projects in Minnesota on artists, the larger arts ecology, neighborhoods, and the regional economy.
- *"Arts and Culture in Urban and Regional Planning: A Review and Research Agenda"* (Journal of Planning Education and Research, 2010)
- *San José Creative Entrepreneurs Project: Artists' Resource and Space Study* (Center for Cultural Innovation, Los Angeles, 2008)
- *Defining, Measuring and Comparing Place-Based Public Investment Outcomes* (Lincoln Land Institute, Cambridge, MA, 2009)
- *Working Effectively with Somali Residents Through the Arts,* a study examining how the non-profit, commercial and academic arts sectors can work more effectively with a large concentration of Somali residents in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood in Minneapolis. (Cedar Riverside Neighborhood Revitalization Program, Minneapolis, 2009)

Gadwa's past professional experience in choreography and managing finances and operations of non-profit arts organizations (Movement Research, NY, 2001-2005 and In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theater, MN, 2005-2007) informs Gadwa's work. For more information and to download publications, visit www.metrisarts.com.

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