

Proceedings of the
european conference
on arts and cultural
education
Amiens

8>10 october 2025



Introduction

The first European Conference on Arts and Cultural Education (ACE), held in Amiens, provided a unique opportunity to reflect on and discuss cultural and educational issues in Europe. For several days, it brought together all stakeholders in ACE: representatives from government departments, local authorities, teachers, cultural organisations, researchers and students. The objective was clear: to take stock of current practices and policies in arts and cultural education, identify innovations and challenges, and develop shared perspectives for the future.

Amiens Métropole, with its rich history and commitment to culture, provided an ideal setting for this conference. For decades, the city and its surrounding area have developed structured programmes for arts and cultural education, from early childhood to adulthood, with a particular focus on inclusion and democratising access to culture. These pioneering, innovative practices make Amiens a laboratory for ACE experimentation and an inspiring example for other regions in France and Europe.

This document summarises the discussions, contributions and avenues for consideration that emerged during the conference. It highlights local experiences, partnership strategies and projects driving social and cultural transformation. More than just a report, it aims to be a tool to feed the debate, inspire new initiatives and strengthen cooperation between European regions in the field of arts and cultural education.

Through these pages, a shared ambition emerges: to make arts and cultural education a lever for social cohesion, creativity and citizenship, and enable every inhabitant, regardless of age or where they are, to access cultural fulfilment.

Acknowledgements

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The European ACE Conference

in figures

3

days

458

participants

96

speakers

3

institutional
sessions

22

round tables

2

shows for
young audiences:
ICARE and *Le Journal
de Maïa**

562

schoolchildren
and children from
leisure centres
welcomed to
the Showroom,
across 26
workshops

2

project
presentations,
*the Orchestre à l'école
concert and the Racines
Carrées residency
with students from
the Conservatoire à
Rayonnement Régional*

12

heritage
visits

1

exhibition

* ICARE by the Coup de Poker theatre company and Le journal de Maïa by La Traversée theatre company

[A1] Institutional perspectives on Arts and Cultural Education

SUMMARY OF OPENING REMARKS

- **Sophie BÉJEAN**, Rector of the Hauts-de-France academic region
- **Xavier BERTRAND**, President of the Hauts-de-France region
- **Hubert DE JENLIS**, Mayor of Amiens
- **Nelly FESSEAU**, Director of the ERASMUS + France agency
- **Alain GEST**, President of Amiens Métropole
- **Pierre MOYA**, Rector of the Amiens academy
- **Hilaire MULTON**, Regional director of cultural affairs for Hauts-de-France
- Moderator : **Sébastien AUCHART**, Director of cultural action and heritage, Amiens Métropole
- Hosts: **Benoît DELAQUAIZE** and **Laurent DRÉANO**, Maison de la Culture d'Amiens

The European Conference on Arts and Cultural Education (ACE) took place from 8 to 10 October 2025, at the Maison de la Culture in Amiens, a founding site of French cultural democratisation. The opening of these three days, dedicated to sharing, innovation and European cooperation, was ensured by a diverse range of institutional stakeholders who supported the success of this event.

A EUROPEAN PLATFORM HELD IN AMIENS

Following the welcome extended to delegates by **Laurent DRÉANO** and **Benoît DELAQUAIZE**, who reiterated the fundamental principles enshrined in the venue's DNA, **Sébastien AUCHART** set the European tone for the event. He emphasised the presence of delegations from across the continent: Finland, Denmark, Spain, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and countries from Central and Eastern Europe. This unprecedented gathering testifies to a growing, shared interest in arts and cultural education beyond France's borders. He concluded by stating that ACE is now one of the most effective drivers of social cohesion, cultural mobility and the development of creativity. It's a policy that connects, opens up and fosters harmony, helping to build a sensitive, informed European citizenship.

AMIENS, A PIONEERING REGION THAT'S PROUD OF ITS HERITAGE

The president of Amiens Métropole, **Alain GEST**, then set the Conference within a long history, intimately linked to the region. Arts and cultural education found fertile ground in Amiens as early as 1968, during a foundational symposium organised two years after the inauguration of the Maison de la Culture. This historical continuity is reflected today in a robust cultural policy: the first Local Contract for Arts Education in 1993, a comprehensive ACE framework at metropolitan level, expansion of the «lifelong learning» programme and «100% ACE» label; a clear ambition, but also a long-term strategy.

Amiens now intends to integrate this legacy into a broader dynamic: that of European cultural cooperation. The President of Amiens Métropole announced the launch of the first ACE network, supported by Erasmus+, bringing together several European countries around joint projects and exchanges of best practice.

Alain GEST ended by defending a demanding vision of arts and cultural education, arguing that in a context of cultural and social division, access to the arts must be considered a fundamental right. He warned of a risk of «cultural dispossession» felt by a segment of the population, advocating increased mediation, the connection to heritage and artistic excellence in the programmes proposed.



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A MUNICIPAL AMBITION FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

The mayor of Amiens, **HUBERT DE JENLIS**, asserted the strong cultural identity of his city, while emphasising that this heritage is not merely a museum piece: it's a driving force for the future. The mayor advocated a policy of cooperation combining the state, local authorities, cultural stakeholders, teachers, associations and residents.



« Amiens Métropole has always spared no effort in promoting arts and cultural education to the widest possible audience. Three out of four students have benefited or are still benefiting from access to this programme during their school year. Moreover, more than 75% of schools have developed a partnership with a cultural organisation in our area. »

Alain GEST



« The conference held over these three days should not be just a moment of reflection. I see it also as an invitation to imagine what the arts and cultural education of tomorrow will look like in the face of the major challenges of our time. »

Hubert DE JENLIS

The city of Amiens boasts a rich local ecosystem deeply involved in ACE initiatives, including the Maison de la Culture, Museum of Picardy, FRAC Picardie, Safran cultural centre, and the On a marché sur la bulle association. These are all places that, according to the Mayor, «spark curiosity, foster critical thinking and bring culture to life». His vision for arts and cultural education is clear: it is not a peripheral policy, but «the heart of the territory's development plan».

ERASMUS+: A STRENGTHENED EUROPEAN DIMENSION

NELLY FESSEAU, director of the Erasmus+ France agency, reiterated that culture and education are at the heart of the European project. The programme, launched in 1987, has expanded considerably: it now supports not just student mobility, but school learning, adult education, cultural projects and innovative training programmes as well.

Access to the programme has been simplified in recent years, notably by directly funding project leaders. With €2.2 billion allocated in France between 2021 and 2027, Erasmus+ represents a significant lever for ACE initiatives. Ms FESSEAU also announced that creativity and artistic expression would be celebrated for the programme's 40th anniversary in 2027.



« While arts and cultural education provides access to artistic practice and culture, Erasmus+ offers the opportunity to experience these activities not only nationally or regionally, but within a European framework as well; by sharing projects, by sharing artworks and analyses of artworks, and by sharing practices. »

Nelly FESSEAU



THE REGIONAL DIRECTORATE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS (DRAC) AND NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM IN RESPONSE TO THE ISSUE OF INEQUALITY

The regional director of cultural affairs, **Hilaire MULTON**, emphasises that arts and cultural education is a unique public policy requiring a long-term, indirect, sustained approach.

After outlining the regional and social characteristics of Hauts-de-France, Mr MULTON noted that 78 of the 91 inter-municipal authorities enjoy a structured partnership with DRAC. The central tool here is the artist-in-residence programme, which guarantees a long-term artistic presence within the different regions (rural areas, as for example the Sept Vallées, or Priority Neighbourhoods of the City - PNCs) to promote artistic practice, encounters with artists, and long-term engagement with the work.

Finally, the Ministry stressed the importance of intergenerational solidarity (lifelong learning) and bringing together lived culture and legitimate culture through a proactive agreement signed with 11 popular education federations, all framed by permanent dialogue authorities.

The vice-chancellor of Amiens Academy, **Pierre MOYA**, emphasised that arts and cultural education is first and foremost a collective endeavour, as no single institution can guarantee a comprehensive cultural experience for all young people and offer each student a high-quality artistic and cultural experience (interactions, practice, knowledge) every year. The major challenge is to bridge the cultural divide in rural areas. To this end, Amiens Academy uses the Rural Educational Regions (RER) programme to encourage local access to the region's rich heritage, but above all, to bring culture into schools (through artist residencies) and support collaborative initiatives such as cultural contracts for middle schools. This approach relies on essential trust among all partners.



« *The first inequality is distance from cultural facilities.* »

Hilaire MULTON

The head of education for the local education authority, **Sophie BÉJEAN**, emphasised that the primary objective of arts and cultural education is to foster empowerment through knowledge and culture, equal opportunities, social cohesion and student success by developing their curiosity, creativity, sensitivity and self-confidence through hands-on experience and encounters with works of art and artists. Ms BÉJEAN highlighted the strategic decision of the Hauts-de-France academic region to establish a regional directorate dedicated to ACE, ensuring coherence, cross-sectoral collaboration and strong partnerships among education and cultural stakeholders, local authorities and European partners (Erasmus+), within a comprehensive vision that acts locally.



« *We firmly believe that culture is not an add-on. It's an essential component of our students' education.*

All this must be integrated with the curriculum and with daily classroom practices to make it a genuine subject of study and democratisation. »

Pierre MOYA



« *Practice fosters openness, curiosity, creativity and sensitivity in students. It also gives them self-confidence and reassurance, in a way; engage their motivation and contribute to their success, including through mastering fundamental knowledge.* »

Sophie BÉJEAN

A POLITICAL COMMITMENT REAFFIRMED AT THE HIGHEST REGIONAL LEVEL

To conclude this segment, the Regional Chairman, **Xavier BERTRAND**, forcefully asserted that, despite local efforts, simply opening cultural venues is not enough to compensate for the early-years, unjust inequalities in access to culture. He delivered a clear political message: arts and cultural education must be built into the French educational framework to permanently correct these injustices.

Meanwhile, he praised the tradition of mobility of ACE stakeholders towards the public, across the region, and stressed the importance of ACE to both teach and love art, pleasure being an essential dimension too often overlooked. Going further, the Chairman emphasised the need to focus first on achievable, innovative objectives rather than yet another general roadmap. He proposed, in particular, using school transport as a space (and no longer just a means) to disseminate culture among young people and strengthen intergenerational projects and the promotion of local heritage.

A SHARED CHALLENGE: TO MAKE ACE A PILLAR OF SOCIETY

The European Conference on Arts and Cultural Education opened with a broad consensus: culture is no longer considered a mere add-on, but a prerequisite for equal opportunities, social cohesion and democratic vitality. ACE emerged as a major lever, capable of connecting stakeholders, regions and generations, both in France and across Europe.



« If Europe doesn't fight for this cultural dimension, this cultural exception, which certainly does not confine, but instead allows us to open up, I don't see which continent, which great country will do it. »

Xavier BERTRAND



ACE, you say?

— **Emmanuel ETHIS**, Interministerial delegate at the Ministry of Culture



Amiens is proud to include the novelist Jules Verne in its history, streets and institutions. Reading *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, for example, raises a genuine question of arts and cultural education. Many readers say, «I started reading it. I couldn't get into it, it was so complicated to read.» But you have to read it to be able to say that. Like Captain Nemo, who takes a library aboard the *Nautilus*, are young people capable of choosing the works they take with them? This is the heart of arts and cultural education: encouraging the selection of works, and offering them.

A survey conducted by the Ministries of Culture and National Education in 2019 showed that 25% of young people were never exposed to any of the activities within the three pillars of arts and cultural education: meeting, practising and learning. 25% of young people in France lack access to the fundamentals. 25% of young people have to travel for more than an hour-and-a-half. What if these were the same people?

Arts and cultural education is undoubtedly one of the few public policies developed with so many partners: local authorities, the state, schools, cultural organisations and transportation. Defining together what needs to be taught is certainly one of the things that should unite them; doing everything possible so that everyone can build their own *Nautilus*, to access creativity and imagination. In her book *Composition française*, historian Mona Ozouf tells how at school, she was asked to write an essay on the theme, «Tell me about the picnic weekend you had in the countryside». She adds, «I'd never had a picnic weekend». She had to invent it, imagine it. The origin of ACE is clearly illustrated here: how to engage with your environment, transcend it, discover and

imagine it? This ambition is also evident: how to enjoy art and society?

The former director of school education, Edouard Geffray, indicated that by 2050, France would experience a demographic decline in school enrolment, with nearly two million fewer students in classrooms. Those who continue to have children tend to come from both the most disadvantaged and most privileged social classes. How can we rebuild a shared culture equally relevant to children from these very different backgrounds? How can we maintain a sense of community? Arts and cultural education clearly aims to foster social cohesion. Its challenge, for all stakeholders, is to develop a common programme so that, in schools, arts and culture produce the best possible outcome for everyone.

One final observation: France is a champion of social reproduction. Sharing European experiences in arts and cultural education can and should inform discussions on collaboration between stakeholders, and even on identifying talent, which is everywhere.

A major focus of reflection must be on local heritage: appropriating it is essential for everyone to fully live in their environment, their region. A trip to the Palace of Versailles should not be the only event that connects a young person to their heritage. That would be tantamount to saying that beauty only exists 500 kilometres from home. Arts and cultural education must allow everyone to get to know their neighbourhood, their city, their region. This takes time, to learn about things, to learn to love. Culture also serves to express, through words and actions, what is otherwise inexpressible. It must be cultivated from a very young age to meet the need for social bonds, connection and love.

Why do some young people lack access to everything, and how can we help them and their families? This is the central question for arts and cultural education. Conversely, should they have access to everything? Is this desirable, even possible? Why is it essential? The answers must be collective. They will allow us to build realistic public policies. To be truly effective, a public policy must be 100% achievable ... like the "100% ACE" label, where everyone has a role to play.

[A3] Is ACE, and its diffusion, a European fundamental, a strategic issue for the European Union?

- **Marie-Christine BORDEAUX**, University Professor - Grenoble Alpes University
- **Catherine MAGNANT**, Head of Unit in charge of Culture, DG ACE - European Commission
- **Corinne POULAIN**, Director of Champs Libres, Rennes, Senior Lecturer at INSEAC
- **Catherine STILMANT**, Director of PECA, Wallonia-Brussels Federation (BE)
- Moderator : **François DECOSTER**, Vice-President in charge of Culture, Heritage, Regional Languages and International Relations, Hauts-de-France Region

Arts and cultural education is discussed at the global level within UNESCO. Within the Organisation, for example, a global network of museum professionals has long addressed education, training and transmission. Worldwide, the concept of arts and cultural education is very broad, encompassing a multitude of approaches and the involvement of public and cultural players, as well as teachers, socio-cultural facilitators, and all stakeholders in the lives of children and young adults in society.

In 2006, UNESCO drafted the **Lisbon strategy**¹, which adopted the French three-pronged approach to arts and cultural education: seeing, doing and knowing. Member States affirmed the right to education and cultural participation, the need to develop individual capacities for the benefit of society, and the necessity for comprehensive improvement in education, in which arts and cultural education would play a role. ACE should also serve to promote cultural diversity.

In 2010, **the Seoul agenda**² was adopted. Member States focused on accessibility to arts and cultural education, as well as the quality of school curricula and activities. The ambition was to meet the challenges of the modern world.

In 2024, at the Abu Dhabi conference, Member States defined the **Global Framework**³, focusing on sustainable development, digital literacy and integration of ACE into programmes and curricula, as well as into the skills of educators (teachers, facilitators, etc.). The document establishes the need for explicit governance and the institutionalisation of arts and cultural education. The objective is therefore to combine advocacy with structured implementation. The document also encourages the production of documentation on ACE (evaluation, understanding, development and future prospects).

The **MondiaCult'** conference, organised by UNESCO, was held in Barcelona in October 2025, with the aim of implementing the 2024 Global Framework. Guidelines were established, as well as the need for a cultural policy library, to support research in this area.

According to Marie-Christine BORDEAUX, UNESCO's texts have had varying degrees of effectiveness. Cultural diversity has not been universally accepted, unlike the concept of cultural exception. Similarly, the notion of cultural rights has found its way into political and theoretical thought, as has the three-pronged approach of seeing, making and knowing.

Other international initiatives exist, such as the **Arts and Education Scientific Interest Group**⁴, which aims, in the long term, to open up internationally to support public policies with a critical perspective from an academic background.

In Europe, arts and cultural education is the heir to grand ideological visions. For an entire generation of stakeholders, Europe, Peace, Culture and Education are part of the same vision, as Corinne POULAIN explains. With this aim of rebuilding connections between peoples, Paul Ricœur emphasised the importance of not minimising latent conflicts to avoid the political effort of building a better future. Those responsible for cultural institutions bear this responsibility. If everyone takes part in the goal of providing access to arts and cultural education for all, a societal project is then achieved, step by step. The role of cultural players is to transmit artistic and cultural resources. Art and culture are antidotes, remedies for the disillusionment conveyed by democracy, as sociologist Eva Illouz writes. In reality, Europe lacks a benchmark framework for building an accessible, streamlined and undoubtedly digital arts and cultural education system that allows for dialogue with other countries.

^{1, 2} : <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>

³ : <https://www.unesco.org>

⁴ : <https://www.unesco.org/fr/mondiaacult>

⁵ : <https://gisartseduc.hypotheses.org>

« This Europe, from Brussels, operates according to what the Member States have agreed to act on together. »

Catherine MIGNANT

With this aim of building cooperative infrastructures, the European Statistical System network (ESSnet) brings together policymakers and representatives of administrations from various European countries to exchange views on the realities on the ground of cultural and artistic education, taking into account the diversity of these realities, which are not erased by framework texts. Each perspective leads to a different cultural policy.

On the ground, public policies operate at different levels - regions, departments, provinces, inter-municipal bodies, municipalities, the national government, Europe - each interpreting UNESCO's vision through the lens of its own territorial interests. Their coordination is an ongoing challenge. Some countries have opted for full integration (France, Belgium and the Netherlands), with a focus on coordinating budgets. This integration is often driven by schools. In Belgium, it's driven by both schools and cultural stakeholders, who are obliged to coordinate their efforts. Other countries have incorporated arts and cultural education into school activities, but on a voluntary basis. This situation raises questions about the actual implementation of these initiatives, their evaluation and the partnerships established by schools, whose financial circumstances sometimes force them to choose the lowest bidder. By focusing on culture, it's not certain that the action will be appropriate, as the cultural institution or artist may simply propose a project to a school without considering whether it will meet its needs. In any case, arts and cultural education remains a budgetary adjustment variable in Europe.

Catherine STILMANT points out that, in practice, stakeholders are establishing fundamental principles and common features: the complementarity of long and short formats for cultural action, the need to train cultural professionals, particularly teachers, and dialogue between all levels of intervention and funding. However, the actual impact of arts and cultural education remains complex to measure.

However, education and culture remain national competencies. **Catherine MIGNANT** points out that the European Commission's involvement in this area is limited to support and networking, not legislation. In 2006, the Commission did, however, establish with European countries the key competences that students should possess. The eighth of these is «cultural awareness and expression». Furthermore, through arts and cultural education, culture is a component of civic competence. A 2023 study revealed that participation in ACE activities encourages civic engagement. In addition to the regulatory framework, the Commission is implementing numerous tools to support implementation at all levels - cities, regions and countries. The Commission is currently preparing a «cultural compass» to define the objectives of its work with European Ministries of Culture for the next five years. Cultural and artistic rights feature prominently within this framework. Europe also collaborates on the transnational Erasmus+ and Creative Europe programmes.

Furthermore, the European Union is a member of the **UN Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Diversity**⁶ (2005). It also sits on the G20, where the role of culture is regularly discussed (AI, copyright, ACE, etc.).

« We have the tools in Europe to develop collaborative discussions with young people. »

Marie-Christine BORDEAUX

A fundamental but often overlooked aspect of this discussion is the beneficiary of arts and cultural education. In practice, youth involvement in European and inter-European programmes is evident. In March 2025, the Genshagen Foundation brought together 21 young French, German and Polish people to discuss the Culture Pass within the context of a significant decrease in government funding for this programme across Europe. As **Marie-Christine BORDEAUX** points out, they expressed several wishes and recommendations, including a desire for greater autonomy, cultural diversity, the opportunity to share their opinions, create, list and recommend events, and establish and participate in an advisory council. Essentially, they want to be recognised, to reflect, act and make decisions.

In Portugal, following the publication of the **Porto Santo Charter**⁷ (2021), young people were encouraged to reflect on the cultural issues that concern them. **Catherine STILMANT** explains that they developed a meaningful methodology, tested in 11 European countries. This approach, which takes the beneficiary - young people - into account, is essential for them to fully express their views on the projects presented to them. The Finns, for their part, have implemented a comprehensive student feedback process following their ACE projects.

Young people are aware of the challenges and opportunities facing them. **Catherine MIGNANT** points out that in Ukraine, young people say they are ready to die for their culture and their nation. Culture fosters strong feelings of belonging. A survey of the European public revealed that culture is the primary factor in building a European identity. The European Commission plans to create a Youth Advisory Council on cultural issues, with a network of ambassadors. The European Minister for Culture is also responsible for Youth and Intergenerational Justice: the approach to this subject is resolutely future-oriented, focused on diversity and unity among all Europeans, to cultivate Europe as an opportunity.

« In response to the question 'What would we be willing to fight for?' ACE is a humble but concrete answer. »

Corinne POULAIN

⁶ : <https://www.unesco.org/fr/legal-affairs/convention-protection-and-promotion-diversity-cultural-expressions>
⁷ : <https://portosantocharter.eu/pt/the-charter/>

[A4] Is ACE an intermediary for the implementation of cultural rights?

- **Sonia LEPLAT**, Managing director of the Centre for amateur artistic practices, Paris
- **Eric FOURREAU**, Director of Éditions de l'Attribut. NECTART / DARDDARD / PANARD

THE ISSUE OF CULTURAL RIGHTS IS DECIDEDLY POLITICAL, BECAUSE THESE RIGHTS ARE THREATENED.

The first threat, a geopolitical one, is the fight against progressive thought, humanism and democracy. This movement prioritises emotion over reasoned thought and knowledge. Two striking examples of this struggle: across the Atlantic, the Trump administration is using information technology to go so far as to suppress the very vocabulary of so-called woke thought; in France, to implement the sex education programme, the Ministry of Education is using Lift, an organisation funded by Pierre-Edouard Sterin, himself a far-right sympathiser.

The evolution of forms of evaluation constitutes a second threat: education is no longer based on experimentation conducive to the development of thought, sensitivity and the individual, but on evaluation criteria inspired by managerial processes.

The third threat is artificial intelligence. Given the enthusiasm surrounding AI and its increasingly widespread use, the lack of regulation in this area is problematic.

Finally, the fourth threat is budget cuts to cultural and educational activities. The way in which cultural and artistic policy is approached is a political marker, and the tendency of the 1980s to defend it has reversed.

Faced with these threats, **Éric FOURREAU** believes that cultural rights - an offshoot of international human rights - must be put back at the heart of the debate, for various reasons.

« We mustn't forget that [cultural rights] stem from human rights and an international context. »

Éric FOURREAU

Defending cultural rights is tantamount to defending human rights in a hostile ideological context. It involves transmitting knowledge differently: starting from the history, practices and abilities of the people you're addressing. Furthermore, cultural rights protect against performative excesses that would subject culture to political and economic dictates, when in fact it is a vehicle for care, creativity and the development of critical thinking. Moreover, this encourages adopting an anthropological perspective, opening up to other areas of activity: sports, nature and so on. Ultimately, uniting around cultural rights is essential to constructing a counter-narrative to the dominant ideologies of rejection of the other and of the market.

In Paris, the Maison des pratiques artistiques amateurs (Centre for Amateur Artistic Practices - MPAA), under the direction of **Sonia LEPLAT**, offers an alternative approach to developing this necessary counter-narrative and supporting cultural rights. The MPAA brings together five spaces dedicated to amateur practice without professional aspirations. Its commitment to amateur practice guarantees free, broad access for everyone, aligning with the same goals as arts and cultural education. Practitioners can thus discover and practise, as well as hone their skills (technique, communication, links with professionals, legal and financial assistance, etc.).

Initiatives like those of the MPAA aim to blur the lines between popular and academic culture, notably by providing access to suitable practice spaces and fostering connections between practitioners. In this way, they allow us to invoke the right to express our diverse identities, a cultural right enshrined in law.

Cultural rights are not an ideology; they must help change practices and open up artistic activities to the widest possible audience, regardless of age or situation. In this sense, arts and cultural education is an essential support for cultural rights.

« Amateur practice is an integral part of a way of life. »

Sonia LEPLAT

[A5.0] What if the priority given to ACE was the beating heart of the artistic projects of cultural operators?

- **Sébastien FAUCON**, Director-Curator of the Lille Metropolitan Museum of Modern, Contemporary and Outsider Art
- **Tanja HOLM**, Cultural Coordinator for Young Audiences, Seinäjoki (FI)
- **Ghislain LEROY**, Director of the Regional Conservatory, Amiens Metropole
- **Felicitas SISINNI GANLY**, Education Officer, Thyssen Museum, Madrid (ES)
- Moderator : **Ludovic ROGEAU**, Director of the Bateau Feu, Dunkirk

There is no doubt that arts and cultural education connects schools with performance venues and exhibition spaces. While schools have made it standard practice to integrate ACE elements into their general curriculum to shape the citizens of tomorrow, what about theatres, conservatories, museums, concert halls and art schools? Given the importance of audience renewal and spectator training, shouldn't arts and cultural education be the very *raison d'être* of cultural institutions? The discussion is at varying stages of development, depending on the context.

In France, where the subject is at the heart of the missions of cultural operators, ACE occupies a significant place in the projects of venues, particularly in labelled venues.

Within national theatres, for example, arts and cultural education projects are truly central, in line with the performance programming. At the Bateau-Feu, Dunkirk's national theatre, **Ludovic ROGEAU**, for instance, has developed them around three artistic points of focus: words (theatre and literature), the body (dance and circus), and images (object theatre). Regarding words, the national theatre hosts the literary festival *Histoires en série* (Stories in Series) which, following a commission from an author, combines readings aloud and writing workshops, involving the public. This will soon be expanded with a comprehensive ACE project entitled *Des Histoires à faire grandir* (Stories to Help Grow), whose objective will be to develop the role of reading among young audiences, as well as the connection with primary and secondary schools and the parent-child relationship. The theatre strives to bring together partners by involving actors from social and medico-social sectors, as well as other cultural institutions to develop a genuine regional dynamic.

« When the will to change practices exists, it's always possible to succeed. »

Felicitas SISINNI GANLY

While theatres have become natural spaces for arts and cultural education, other institutions in France have also adapted their operations to incorporate this practice, such as conservatories of theatre, music and dance. Although the 1,000 French conservatories, which together have nearly 300,000 students, were originally created to train musicians throughout the country, notably to allow promising talents to be identified and trained locally and then sent to Paris, they have become more «popular» and increasingly deinstitutionalised spaces, focusing more on the personal project and individuality of the student, which means they can fully play their role in arts and cultural education.

The push for cultural democratisation that developed in the mid-20th century has already contributed significantly to this, especially since in France, conservatories are funded by local authorities. In the 2000s, the professional body of musicians working in schools emerged, the first real attempt to bridge the gap between specialist music education and mainstream schools. The same is true of the dynamics of school orchestras. In this context, arts and cultural education and support for amateur practice are now fully integrated into the conservatories' roadmap: **Ghislain LEROY** emphasises the importance of not viewing them as contradictory mandates. The conservatory can be experienced as a space for social interaction and must therefore take into account the nature of its audience and environment by creating, for example, participatory performances or workshops that allow overly theoretical aspects to be bypassed to lead to collective creations. It's also important to make the public understand that art is not born solely within conservatories, but also in unexpected places such as prisons, hospitals or on the street, and that the conservatory can be a place for interaction and understanding of art, and not just a place of elitist learning. In this sense, arts and cultural education contributes to the dynamic of changing the image and perception of art and culture: it is a major issue for cultural institutions.

Similarly, the museum has moved beyond its role as a mere repository of heritage to enter an era of education, as well as artistic and cultural practice. For **Sébastien FAUCON** from the LaM (Lille), it's essential to examine existing practices to share and give meaning to work and interaction, particularly in the area of ACE. In addition to its ambition to present a broad collection with a fresh perspective, the spaces reserved for educational workshops, open to families and schools, have been redesigned to stimulate all the senses, as well as transform the museum into a vibrant, supportive space for all visitors. This will foster audience loyalty through welcoming, hospitable spaces where, within the ACE framework, children can create, settle in and fully engage. PEPS (Educational and Cultural Practices Programmes) aim specifically to encourage young people's artistic practice and facilitate encounters with the teams of regional cultural institutions.

« While a museum's mission is obviously to enrich and preserve works of art, it also involves transmission and inclusion. »

Sébastien FAUCON

The first challenge in deploying arts and cultural education lies in adapting cultural venues and projects to accommodate new practices and new ways of operating. Connection is not as seamless everywhere in Europe, as **Tanja HOLM** points out. In this case, the Navetta project, led by the city of Seinäjoki, Finland, encountered this challenge from the outset. Aimed at a multicultural audience, Navetta planned to organise free events open to all, involving a diverse range of actors and associations. The municipality operated as coordinator, supporting various organisations in a shared project, whereas previously they had each operated independently. The city of Seinäjoki has several arts and cultural centres, and Navetta was not well integrated as a fundamental part of each venue's diverse programmes. Within this dynamic, in Finland as elsewhere, municipal services often collaborate on ACE projects by offering free use of certain communal spaces.

As well as the central role of cultural operators working with artists, in Spain, a critical reflection has been conducted on how to make museums more permeable to everyday life, to attract larger audiences. To democratise art and certain institutions, **Felicitas SISINNI GANLY** believes it's sometimes necessary to move beyond the precision of cultural experts and incorporate new, less academic profiles. This is one of the objectives of EducaThyssen, which promotes collaboration with local communities and schools by offering museum experiences connected to the curriculum. The school-museum relationship is considered complementary, fostering, for example, respect for differences and enabling more enriching and diverse learning experiences for students.

« It's clear that there is a real lack of confidence on the part of the education system regarding the educational role of a museum. »

Felicitas SISINNI GANLY

Faced with distrust of educational systems, EducaThyssen has engaged with diverse audiences, drawing on their needs and interests to identify new ways of impacting the community by exploring how art resonates within the social sphere. Unfortunately, in Spain, EducaThyssen, created with a genuine socio-educational mission, remains a unique structure, made up of only eight people and lacking stable funding.

To ensure that arts and cultural education has the best chance to develop, one approach is to implement artistic projects from an early age. As **Tanja HOLM** explains, the city of Seinäjoki pays particular attention to children, with a clear commitment to removing barriers and making art accessible to all. The Louhimo Cultural Centre, a children's centre managed by the city's cultural services, specialises in music and circus arts and primarily targets children, young people, families, schools and early childhood education services. It offers free events involving a wide range of stakeholders. Numerous such examples exist (Taituri, Kulttuurimatka, Kalevan Navetta, etc.): in this way, the ACE plan implemented ensures equal access to art in education for all children, while remaining connected to the school curriculum.

Arts and cultural education can therefore become a cornerstone of every cultural organisation's mission. While the initial impetus can come from a single institution, it must inevitably spread to the network of local stakeholders - political, educational, cultural and social - in order to take shape, develop and acquire meaning. And the ever-present threat of funding, whether public or private, remains.

« Cultural institutions must have the right to set up projects whose purpose is not exclusively directed towards a qualitative result in the professional sense of the term, especially when the work takes place with children. »

Ghislain LEROY

Experimentation in a school group during the Lección de Arte exhibition in 2018, Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum



[A5.1] Does the relevance and success of an ACE project necessarily require the presence of the artist?

- **Catherine DUVERGER**, Visual Artist
- **Alain KERLAN**, Honorary University Professor – Education, Culture, Policies Laboratory, Lumière Lyon 2 University
- **Julien ROBIQUET**, Culture Director - Béthune-Bruay Artois Lys Romane Urban Community
- **Sibille WALLOIS**, Head of the Public and Mediation Division, Amiens Métropole
- Moderator : **Valérie FARANTON**, Regional Academic Delegate for Arts and Cultural Education

Arts and cultural education has historically been structured around three foundation stones - encounter, practice, knowledge - which is not simply an administrative framework, but a genuine experience system. Following in the footsteps of work initiated within the public sector, an approach championed largely by **Valérie FARANTON** highlights the central role of these three founding principles in developing a sensitive relationship with the world. Arts and cultural education thus emerges as a space where the formation of an active cultural consciousness takes place, and not simply as a means of dissemination.

This perspective aligns with a concept of ACE where artistic presence is not incidental, but fundamental. Through an interpretation inspired by the analyses of **Alain KERLAN**, the artist emerges as the central figure of ACE: not as a bearer of specialist knowledge, but as a driver of shifting perception. This approach, inherited from the theories of the «cinema hypothesis», views the artist as a disruptive element within the school setting, introducing the unexpected and fostering the emergence of creative thought.

« The artist's presence isn't optional: it forms the very DNA of ACE. »

Alain KERLAN

Within this context, arts and cultural education is not seen as mere cultural mediation, but as a space for symbolic transformation. The initiatives launched locally - such as the first local arts education contracts - demonstrate this

dynamic. They do not aim to bring culture to the public, but to create the conditions for an aesthetic encounter capable of permanently altering individuals' relationship to their environment.

Reflections stemming from contemporary creative approaches, such as those explored by **Catherine DUVERGER** in her Hello Birdy project, show that artwork is not an end in itself, but a process. The artistic project becomes a space for investigating reality: by exploring landscape elements, companion species or personal narratives, the artist constructs a space for sensitive inquiry where the student is invited to question their own perception. This approach reveals that the artist does not transmit content; rather, they facilitate the experience.

The artist's presence introduces a working method that cannot be reduced to any other function. Whereas the mediator guides and explains, the artist engages in a sensory relationship that shifts the boundaries of learning. Arts and cultural education is thus defined less by what it offers than by how it brings about an experience.

This dynamic is further developed through consideration of temporalities. In his work with local authorities, **Julien ROBIQUET** highlights that artistic creation requires a flexible framework, allowing for a balance between the extended timeframe of a residency and more focused interventions. The success of a project depends not only on the quality of the work produced, but also on how the temporal structure allows the student to fully engage with the experience.

The analysis of educational effects reveals what some theoretical approaches define as a «zone of aesthetic development»: the artist, through their way of relating to the student, opens a space for subjectivation that goes beyond the acquisition of skills. The artistic experience thus becomes a place where the subject establishes themselves as a sensitive, thinking being, outside the logic of performance.

« The artistic process transforms the region as much as the artist himself: it's a sensory shift, not a device. »

Catherine DUVERGER

Artistic presence acts as a catalyst for collective transformation. Research on ACE shows that it impacts not just students, but teachers, families and all partner organisations, too. Within this context, **Julien ROBIQUET** highlights how ACE helps extend the boundaries of school into the wider community by developing projects co-created with cultural stakeholders. This dynamic, supported by **Valérie FARANTON**, paves the way for ACE conceived as a space for empowerment, social cohesion and inclusion.



[A5.2] How do the various European ACE policies contribute to shaping the European cultural citizen?

- **Carlos ALONSO PEREZ**, Art Historian, Exhibition Curator (ES)
- **Cyrielle CAUDROY**, Head of visitor services department, Compiègne Internment and Deportation Memorial
- **Marika OJALA**, Director of Primary Education, Seinäjoki (FI)
- **Nabil OUELHADJ**, Artistic Director and Choreographer – Racines Carrées Company, Roubaix
- Moderator : **Catherine SCHNEIDER**, Head of the ACE Department, National Library of France

The civic impact of culture is a frequently debated topic; attempts at control by political ideologies clearly demonstrate this. Several observations stem from the principles and results of arts and cultural education.

By bringing together people from diverse social backgrounds and making art and its expression accessible to all audiences, arts and cultural education fosters social cohesion. ACE offers those who are distanced from art an engaging, accessible, collective cultural experience. It also facilitates transmission of memory. It puts into practice the principles of equality, freedom, respect for human rights and democracy, thus helping develop a conscious, active European citizenship.

European history is the product of terrible events; peace in Europe is in itself a miracle. The integration of different populations must continue, and European institutions must be protected. It is essential to continue reflecting on European identity. ACE is certainly one of the best tools for this.

Faced with international crisis - economic, societal, social and ideological - individual mental resilience and collective cooperation play a vital role. Intercultural relations, understanding of others and education foster this cooperation and resilience. To achieve this, interactions between all levels and all structures of society are required, particularly on a cultural level: sociocultural and cultural players are therefore at the forefront here.

In terms of structures and stakeholders, motivation is the central element for fostering cooperation and overcoming the practical challenges of cultural action. For **Nabil OUELHADJ**,

the key is to produce tools that participants in ACE projects can subsequently use and adapt, whether they are teachers or students. Participants must be active agents in their development. To this end, the ACE facilitator must maintain a horizontal relationship with them and value their participation. The desired outcome is not excellence, but rather a positive view of the proposed artistic activity and the ability to adapt to different contexts and audiences.

When it comes to fostering a better understanding of European cultures and peoples, it's difficult to measure the effectiveness of ACE. The alarming rise of anti-European sentiment and growing far right in Europe demonstrate the dysfunctions of a European culture built on fear of the other. **Carlos ALONSO PEREZ** could not imagine a better system than ACE to combat this phenomenon, since it also addresses the emotional aspect.

On an individual level, **Nabil OUELHADJ** emphasises the benefits artistic practice brings to people's social, mental and physical well-being. Some effects cannot be measured, such as the desire it instils in young people to become independent, awaken their senses, travel and learn about their history. This can encourage them to appreciate people from different cultures, fight for their rights and ensure that democracy survives. Physical activity, for example, is a valuable practice for the health of both body and mind. People regain confidence in their physical abilities. At every level, self-improvement becomes extraordinary by adapting to each individual without striving for performance. By guiding participants in a playful, demystified approach to art, collective intelligence fosters positive collective movements that improve social health.

Negative beliefs can be challenged by becoming more open to others. Culture expands by replacing fear with fascination towards others. ACE thus assumes a strong responsibility in constructing the European citizen.

Therefore, at the national level, the European context allows for a remarkable unity. European citizens must learn to cherish this sense of belonging and mutual respect. Nowhere else in the world does a unity like Europe exist, sharing common values. ACE expresses these European values and this European pride. We must maintain this willingness to reach agreements and preserve these exchanges. Sharing experiences between different countries is probably the main tool for ensuring the continuity of this European miracle.

While identical action is often politically difficult to introduce across all European countries, joint non-governmental action is possible. This begins with identifying the diverse sources of funding available to the various stakeholders in ACE. To this end, networks are developing, such as **Meed -Music Europe Éducation¹**, which brings together music educators from across Europe to share their teaching methods and reach all ACE professionals. Networks of ACE stakeholders would benefit from being strengthened throughout Europe - like the European Conference in Amiens, which facilitates the sharing of methods, ideas and resources, fosters networking opportunities and so enables the formation of networks. **Catherine SCHNEIDER** also highlights the need to strengthen cooperation between the education and cultural sectors. A sensitive approach, running parallel to national education curricula, would allow students to better grasp these curricula and develop different ways of integrating knowledge.

It is essential to move beyond the political imperative of quantitative evaluation to appreciate the concrete, joyful impact generated among the audiences reached by arts and cultural education. This positive impact extends beyond students, reaching their families and friends, and must be valued as such. It goes beyond the use of cultural facilities and cannot be quantified.

However, in some countries, it can be difficult to convince policymakers of the value of investing without an economic return, as is the case in Spain, as **Carlos ALONSO PEREZ** explains. It is therefore crucial to highlight the positive transformations brought about by ACE to ensure their visibility among institutions. Unfortunately, simply being convinced of the positive impact is not enough. Data is needed to prove these results and secure investment for education programmes.

The risk with ACE is the technocratisation of culture. Isolated cultural actions can be perceived as meaningless, acting as a deterrent to audiences. Yet, taken together, they form a European cultural fabric that contributes to the resilience of peoples regularly overwhelmed by the noise of the world.

ACE in Spain, France and Finland

	SPAIN	FRANCE	FINLAND
DRIVERS	ACE policy is driven by the regions. Projects are mostly private or semi-private initiatives	At the heart of state and local government policies.	National directives and programmes are dedicated to the education sector, but regional disparities exist. Each municipality has arts and culture departments that provide services based on their activities.
SPECIFIC FEATURES	The cultural identity of Spaniards is strongly influenced by their territories and close relations with the Arab world and Latin America.	Implemented in the territories by actors in the cultural, educational and social fields.	Cultural partners are often museums and libraries. They all fall under the administrative remit of Education and Social Affairs.
COMMON POINTS	Importance of artists in the schemes Co-construction with project stakeholders: teachers, cultural institutions and artists		

¹ : <https://padlet.com/europe20/music-europe-education-network-3dxx02kialss7nqf>

[A5.3] Once upon a time, there was ACE: an attempt at a theory of the evolution of a public policy.

- **Marie-Christine BORDEAUX**, University Professor - Grenoble Alpes University
- **Emma DUQUET**, Contractual doctoral student in Comparative Literature and Cinema
- **Patrick LIEBART**, Visual Arts Teacher
- **Pascal NEVEUX**, Director of FRAC Picardie
- **Christian VIEAUX**, Inspector General - Visual Arts Specialisation and ACE CTIG for the Rennes Academy
- Moderator : **Lucie VERDEIL**, PhD Student in Information and Communication Sciences, Observatory of Cultural Policies

Throughout the history of arts and cultural education, we find a discreet but persistent thread: a simple, almost subversive idea that creativity is not an add-on, but a way of being in the world. Long championed by unconventional educators, artist-teachers and advocates of experimentation, this way of thinking has, in just a few decades, become a major political, institutional and territorial issue. From the workshop-classroom of the 1950s to the «100% ACE» labels of the 21st century, ACE has been transformed: from an active pedagogy, it has become a strategic public policy, permeated by competing ideologies, territorial considerations, democratic imperatives and dreams of empowerment.

But how did these pioneering actions, these sometimes artisanal practices, transform into an institutionalised field, supported by ministries, educational resources, dedicated training and sometimes abundant mechanisms? From the creative freedom of a village schoolteacher to today's shared governance, what tensions - philosophical, political, professional - does ACE represent?

In short, ACE is a story of conquest, hesitation, ideals and now ... strategies.

When **Emma DUQUET** speaks of her great-grandfather, Pierre Duquet, she is not simply conjuring up a family figure: she is recalling the genealogy of an artistic education founded on freedom, creativity and trust in the child. An artist

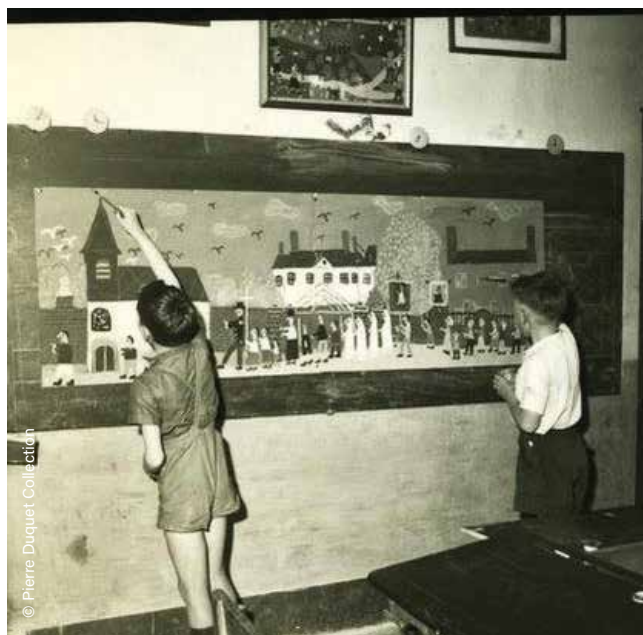
and teacher in the 1950s in Picardy, Pierre Duquet shaped, in his village school in Creuse, an educational philosophy now considered emblematic of active learning education.

Influenced by artists he met during his five years detained in an officers' camp during World War II, he returned with a fierce desire to transmit the ideal of freedom that art nurtured in him.

« School should not be a place of authority, but a space for collectively learning autonomy and freedom. »

Emma DUQUET

Between 1945 and 1953, he transformed the space of his single classroom into a collective workshop to promote the role of materials, mistakes and experimentation, encouraging the practice of personal drawing journals or observing nature, considering the thinking of the child as legitimate as that of the adult.



School of Creuse, 1945-1953

His approach encouraged children to create, convinced of the educational role of the creative process. And so, what was once education for art became primarily education through art. Initially poorly understood by the institution - «the inspectors didn't understand why we let children make mistakes», recalls Emma Duquet - this approach nevertheless resonated internationally, with children's drawings being exhibited worldwide.

Around the same time, another schoolteacher made his mark on history: Maurice Choquet, whose portrait **Pascal NEVEUX** paints. In Allonville, Choquet also invented an «open classroom», a prolific laboratory where a wide variety of artistic practices flourished. His extensive archives bear witness to «a collective dynamic at work in each production» and raise the still relevant question: «How can we mediate within a region, especially in a rural area?»

These pioneers, well before institutional texts, were already exploring what ACE would become: a space for experimentation, an alliance between creation and pedagogy, an instrument of social as well as artistic emancipation.

In the beginning, as **Marie-Christine BORDEAUX** reminds us, "school was culture": many artists were teachers, and art formed an integral component of education. The turning point came in 1968, at the Amiens colloquium, where there was a campaign for "an artistic school" founded on experimentation and creativity.

From 1977 onwards, the State organised its actions: creation of the Jean-Claude Luc mission, academic commissions in the rectorates, breaking down the barriers between the worlds of National Education and Culture. In 1983, the first structured programmes emerged: artistic practice workshops, memoranda of understanding with cultural institutions, and an increase in partnerships.



« The 1980s marked the era of institutionalisation, the democratic imperative, and investment by local authorities. »

Marie-Christine BORDEAUX

The basic building block is shifting from the artist-teacher pairing to networks, institutions and communities. New alliances are then being forged between ministries.

The 2000s were marked by the widespread adoption championed by Jack Lang, who stated: «We must start with the number of children». The objective became making all this accessible to the masses. Artist training, cultural and educational resources, multi-year plans: arts and cultural education changed to a new scale. But this massification was divisive and created new tensions between national directives and local realities.

In the 2010s, the players were losing momentum: teachers were forced to become «system specialists», political instability prevailed, and programmes proliferated. Hence the demand for stability: shared governance, the drafting of an ACE Charter, the creation of INSEAC, and «100% ACE» labels.

Today, **Marie-Christine BORDEAUX** explains, the challenge is to move «from a discourse of conviction to a discourse based on evidence». But a logic of return on investment is also developing, which is reshaping the objectives. In forty years, arts and cultural education has gone from a teaching intuition to a structuring cultural policy.

Historical development of ACE in France and the imperatives assigned to it.

60' 70'	Experimentation	imperative of creativity	• educational reform, openness to society and culture • 'cultural action' in schools (FIC, 1971; creation of the J-Claude Luc Mission, 1977; academic cultural action committees, 1978)
80'	Institutional innovation / formalisation of practices	imperative of quality / aesthetic imperative	• 1983 national memorandum of understanding, first cultural initiatives: Education: workshops, optional subjects, school trips • role of specifications in the dissemination of practices, learning about institutional partnership
90'	Territorialisation	democratic imperative	• expansion of the partnership beyond the teacher/artist duo. • territorially-focused measures (at the level of the school, the education catchment area, or even the department): twinning, experimental sites, recognised role of local authorities (local education contracts)
2000'	Generalisation	imperative of massification	• 5-year plan for the arts in schools Lang-Tasca. • Discreet but assertive and growing investment by local authorities (particularly towns and departments)
2010'	Anchoring	imperative for stabilisation	• ACE programme enshrined in the 2013 law • Relaunch of the High Council for ACE and growth of the role of local authorities (2013, 2017) ACE Charter (2016) • Creation of INSEAC (Guingamp), a national centre of excellence for training and research • '100% ACE' label (from 2022)
2020'	Return on investment	imperative of knowledge	• Bring together and organise scientific exchanges between research teams working on ACE: creation of the GIS Arts & Education (September 2025) • Encourage research to move from a discourse of conviction to a discourse based on knowledge

Marie-Christine Bordeaux, in Bordeaux, Kerlan (2025), *Evaluating Arts and Cultural Education: Epistemological and Political Issues in Research*, Ministry of Culture (DEPS) / Presses de Sciences Po

Christian VIEAUX, for his part, offers a valuable roadmap: that of the «Quarrels of/in artistic education», helping us understand the internal contradictions in this field.

Two convictions have historically clashed. On the one hand, the socio-moral conviction, for which art is a non-standardised space, incompatible with school constraints, and on the other, the socio-cultural conviction, which sees school as a place for the transmission of a legitimate repertoire of forms, norms and values.

These two visions lead to distinct teaching methods: artistic imitation and sensory experiences on the one hand, and structured teaching of cultural history on the other. According to **Christian VIEAUX**, students often remain «stuck in this conflict of values».

He also distinguishes the importance of cultural awareness, focusing on immersion and encounter, and the importance of artistic culture, which could «tend to say that art has no place in school» - a proposition refuted by the historical successes of ACE.

The key, he insists, is the authenticity of experiential situations and meeting «people who practise». But beware the «cult of creativity for creativity's sake»: creation requires tools, timeframes and varied formats.

«Art is inherently liberating through its ideal of freedom. This ideal must be cultivated, without confusing it with the mere experience of otherness, and we must escape conceptual constraints.»

Christian VIEAUX

In other words, ACE is not immune to deep philosophical tensions that still structure its practice.

For **Patrick LIEBART**, arts and cultural education is not limited to schools: it's built on a network of actors and intersectoral collaborations, and cannot be a simple «quiet revolution». He qualifies Jack Lang's famous statement: «there is no other place than school to organise everyone's encounter with art».

«ACE projects take shape through a multitude of players, not just in schools.»

Patrick LIEBART

He mentions networks of experimental schools like Vitruve in Paris or Villeneuve in Grenoble: cooperative practices, mechanisms for collective empowerment and student autonomy. More recently, discussions have raised the question, «How can we make a classroom function as a work of art?» - a question that reconfigures objectives, learning and the educational space. Within this dynamic, the Alea network brings together historians, literary theorists, aesthetic philosophers and epistemologists: an intellectual ecosystem that feeds educational practices.

Pascal NEVEUX offers a regional perspective. He maps the galleries in schools in the Oise, Somme and Aisne departments, essential spaces for «fostering encounters and exchanges between artists, artworks, teachers and students», particularly in areas lacking exhibition facilities. He cites the FRAC's educational approach - «Listen if it's raining» - which aims to be responsive to schools and committed to genuinely collaborative projects.

Patrick LIEBART also mentions experiments such as «A museum at school», where students become players in a cooperative museum, or the NEFE project in Tinquieux, completely rethinking the spatial organisation of the school to «do school differently».

These initiatives raise a strategic question: should arts and culture come to the school, or should the school go to arts and culture?

For **Christian VIEAUX**, both levers are required: bringing art to school, sending school towards art. He cites the example of the ROA network of the 1990s: «no middle school student will dodge a work of art», a structuring injunction at a time when less than 4% of students in Nord-Pas-de-Calais had visited a cultural institution.

“ACE requires painstaking individual work”, he concludes: patience, perseverance, and a large regional network are essential to reach the 40% of students from rural, peri-urban and isolated areas.

From Pierre Duquet's intuitive workshops to the shared policies of the 2020s, from children's creativity to the mapping of school galleries, arts and cultural education has become a complex, strategic, multidimensional object. It's both a legacy - that of teacher-artists who conceived of emancipation from a child's perspective - and a structured political field, sometimes saturated with mechanisms, always seeking a balance between massification, quality, freedom and evidence.

If ACE has become strategic, it's because it addresses crucial issues: regional equality, cultural participation, civic education and cooperation between institutions. But it remains fraught with fundamental tensions: art or school? Sensitive or normative? Interaction or transmission? Freedom or system?

Perhaps, like Pierre Duquet, we should hold fast to a simple conviction: arts education is not merely a public policy. It's a way of inhabiting the world with attentiveness, imagination and freedom. It's also a way of believing that every child has the right to an authentic creative experience - and that no strategy is worthwhile if it does not embody this ideal.

[BO] Opening the second day

- **Naomi PERES**, Director General of Cultural Democracy, Education and Research, Ministry of Culture
- **Pierre SAVREUX**, Vice-President of Amiens Métropole, responsible for culture and heritage



Amiens has been hosting the first European Conference on Arts and Cultural Education (ACE) since yesterday, bringing together local, national and international stakeholders to discuss access to culture for all. A pioneering city in this field for over fifty years, Amiens has successfully combined innovation, experimentation and strong local roots to make ACE a genuine societal policy.

AMIENS, EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF ARTS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION FOR THREE DAYS

Pierre SAVREUX, Vice-President for Culture and Heritage at Amiens Métropole, opened the second day of the event by recalling the city's rich history in arts and cultural education. From the founding symposium in 1968 to the signing of the first Local Contract for Arts Education (LCAE) in 1993, Amiens has built a model integrating culture into education from a very young age. «We want no child to be excluded from an artistic and cultural journey», he stated. Local initiatives, such as orchestras in schools, «School at the Cinema» and the special comics programme are all examples of this practical approach, which aims to develop young people's **autonomy, confidence and critical thinking skills**.

The Vice-President also highlighted the systematic integration of ACE into the design of the city's new cultural facilities. The transformation of the former postal sorting centre into a hub dedicated to comics and contemporary art, and the adaptation of the National Library of France project to accommodate ACE classes, illustrate this commitment to making culture a **driver of development and social cohesion**.

For her first address as Director General at the Ministry of Culture, **Naomi PERES** chose the European Conference on Arts and Cultural Education in Amiens, a place she described as «exemplary» for its pioneering history and the remarkable commitment of the Hauts-de-France Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs (DRAC). The national vision for arts and cultural education was then presented, emphasising three key areas: guaranteeing universal access to cultural life, integrating ACE into a lifelong educational continuum, and strengthening partnerships with the State, local authorities and community organisations. She believes ACE is an «essential building block» of access to cultural rights and citizenship, a tool for fostering **pride and autonomy in young people** and promoting participation in cultural life.

Finally, **Naomi PERES** emphasised that ACE cannot be conceived without close cooperation between the State, local authorities, cultural stakeholders, community education organisations and non-profit associations. She defended the need for this partnership model, still sometimes misunderstood, but essential to the vitality of French culture. The State, she affirmed, must remain an attentive partner, capable of supporting local initiatives and providing national - and perhaps tomorrow, European - visibility to this collective action.

The European Conference in Amiens thus comes across as a **laboratory for innovation**, combining historical heritage, local excellence and European ambition. It illustrates the capacity of French cities to make arts and cultural education an instrument of social cohesion and international reach, in a context where culture is increasingly seen as a strategic factor for young people and regional development.

[B1] ACE, a public policy managed and invested in differently depending on the state and regional organisations of the EU States.

- **Carlos ALONSO PEREZ**, Art Historian, Exhibition Curator (ES)
- **Marie BONDE OLESEN**, Associate Research Professor at UCL University, Lecturer in Social Sciences (DK)
- **Marika OJALA**, Director of Primary Education, Seinäjoki (FI)
- **Raphaël ROTH**, Lecturer in Information and Communication Sciences, National Institute for Arts and Cultural Education (FR)
- **Anna RUDAT**, Head of Arts and Cultural Education, North Rhine-Westphalia Region (DE)
- **Michael SUMMERS**, Director of Music Services, County Durham (UK)
- Moderator : **Jean-Marie SANI**, Academic Regional Delegate for European and International Relations and Cooperation

The diversity of national political and governmental structures results in a wide variety of organisations and initiatives in arts and cultural education across Europe. A brief overview reveals their scope.

Spain lacks a national ACE structure; these responsibilities lie with the autonomous regions. While a national plan and budget exist, they are managed by the regions, as culture is not considered an overarching objective, but rather an expression of the identities of the historical regions that make up the country. Spain is a collection of extremely diverse regions, each with its own budget and policies to address its identity. Local budgets are therefore larger than the combined national and regional budgets, with folklore and local festivals being the primary cultural budget items. **CARLOS ALONSO PEREZ** sees this as the reason why it's difficult to develop long-term projects for education and culture in Spain.

In contrast, as **Anna RUDAT** points out, Germany enjoys a long tradition of arts and cultural education, an integral part of the education system, with the law stipulating that education, science and culture fall under the jurisdiction of the Länder (federal states). In 2023, the budget for culture amounted to €8.5 million, 87% of which came from the Länder and cities, compared to just 13% from the federal government. The Länder advise cities receiving «unrestricted» budgets on developing long-term ACE programmes, with careful attention paid to the practical implementation of these initiatives.

In France, in 2024, the ACE budget, which amounted to €3.5 billion, was funded by local authorities to the tune of only around €500,000 - the €3 billion provided by the State primarily covered the salaries of arts education teachers. A survey conducted by the Court of Auditors and the French National Institute for Arts and Cultural Education (Inseac) concluded that there was significant regional disparity, as well as a governance structure operating simultaneously at the local and national levels. Another survey carried out by Inseac on the role of ACE in schools demonstrates that in France, it originates primarily from teachers' initiatives, before being taken up by media libraries, which are considered as resource centres. This regionalisation of ACE is largely due to inter-municipal bodies, for which it is not a mandatory responsibility, and to municipalities and other local authorities. It is also important to mention the issue of the «100% ACE» label, as the survey clearly showed that this label was extremely structuring and of concrete interest for ACE, particularly in that it provides a real driver of the deployment of ACE and its professionalisation.

The French Culture Pass is seen as an essential tool in areas where fewer other structuring mechanisms for arts and cultural education exist, according to **Raphaël ROTH**. The survey also identified three types of regions: the «Three Frances of ACE», which are «Regions to train and inform», generally rural and lacking project leaders; the «Professionalised France of ACE», namely the France of the «100% ACE» label, mainly composed of urban or semi-urban areas with liaison teachers, ACE coordinators and cultural structures near



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classrooms; and intermediate France, «Experimental and innovative regions of ACE», which occupies the largest space and covers semi-rural and semi-urban areas, which therefore largely rely on the transport authority of the inter-municipal bodies.

In Finland, the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Culture are combined into a single ministry. **Marika OJALA** explains that this ministry funds a number of initiatives for cities, which then enjoy considerable autonomy regarding their ACE programmes. These programmes are also supported by various cultural associations and foundations. While the State offers guidance, tools and logistical support, ACE remains primarily a local, private responsibility.

In Denmark, ACE is an initiative built into the education system. At the primary and secondary levels, however, ad hoc activities take place outside school hours, in partnership with private organisations and with a focus on long-term learning. The city sets objectives and defines the framework for collaboration between these organisations and the schools. Norway enjoys collaboration between the national, regional and local levels in all artistic fields, with ad hoc funding distributed according to demographics and the nature of existing infrastructure. In Sweden, ACE is fully funded by the state, with interested cities or schools applying for grants. For **Marie BONDE OLESEN**, the Scandinavian situations demonstrate a shared, national vision of the essential role of culture and art in the educational curriculum.

In England, art is an integral part of education within the framework of traditional school activities. However, numerous extracurricular organisations also support ACE, which is then subsidised by the Department for Arts and Culture, as well as local private investors. **Michael SUMMERS** sees this as a continuation of the funding of British cultural institutions.

« The constraints of each country necessarily call for different approaches to implementing ACE projects. »

Marie BONDE OLESEN

Within this context of numerous, diverse and potentially incompatible approaches, cooperation between systems, particularly via the European Union, is a key topic for ACE.

European culture and citizenship are now integral to the education of young people. The ERASMUS project is therefore central, according to **Marika OJALA**, because it can facilitate European collaboration at all levels. This collaboration is essential because it will also allow for reflection on new practices and new models for teacher training, based on the results of European academic research. Successfully collecting and compiling knowledge on ACE would undoubtedly lead to better European collaboration and facilitate ACE's contribution to European students. The reality of this vision is palpable: the United Kingdom, having left the European Union and ERASMUS programme, is no longer a major player in European ACE, as **Michael SUMMERS** points out.

A number of collaborative projects have been introduced to promote ACE in Europe. The German-Danish project at the Flugt Museum, led by **Marie BONDE OLESEN**, is a good example. This partnership helps students discover the history of German refugees in Denmark after 1945, a history not taught in Danish schools. German and Danish ACE methods and approaches have been combined to enhance the project. Another possible option is adaptation. Spain sought inspiration from a French project called «Le petit champion de la lecture» (The Little Reading Champion), which brings together more than 100,000 participants each year. Nevertheless, given the 17 highly autonomous cultural regions that make up Spain, **Carlos ALONSO PEREZ** believes it would be necessary to rely on a large-scale, supportive structure - whether a city or an institution - to reconcile the sometimes very different constraints from one region to another, particularly linguistic ones. In Germany, one of the major challenges remains the remuneration of artists who, despite often having solid professional backgrounds, struggle to make a living from this type of work, laments **Anna RUDAT**. Following collaboration at national level with the 16 regional ministries, their payment is now based on a standardised rate.

« Inspiration and transposition are two difficult stages. »

Jean-Marie SANI

Without seeking a single policy or action to be uniformly copied from one country to another, one region to another, some traits are common to the multiple organisations carrying out ACE, whatever their scale, to guarantee the sustainability of their action: the cooperation of stakeholders and complementarity of funding.

[B2] ACE: an alternative cultural development strategy, or how to mobilise rural areas and their inhabitants?

- **Carlos ALONSO PEREZ**, Art Historian, Exhibition Curator (ES)
- **Caroline CARDOSO**, Head of the Culture and Heritage Department, 7 Vallées Local Council Community
- **Thomas CAUMARTIN**, CLEA Coordinator, Pays de Saint-Omer Urban Community
- **Vincent DUMESNIL**, Co-Director of La Chambre d'eau, Le Favril
- **Julien ROBIQUET**, Culture Director - Béthune-Bruay Artois Lys Romane Urban Community
- Moderator : **Ludovic PIARD**, Music and Live Performance Project Manager, Amiens Metropole

Regardless of its size, a region is defined as a collection of infrastructure, heritage, inhabitants, local stakeholders and cultural operators, as well as by a certain political or ideological conception of these components. Often perceived as urban phenomena, art and culture are moving beyond this preconceived notion to flourish within the concept of rural life as well. As such, arts and cultural education is an increasingly common tool for mobilising and connecting inhabitants and regions, within a framework of cultural development that goes beyond ideological boundaries. However, the implementation of ACE is specific to each context.

« The aim of cultural policy is to strengthen this sense of belonging to a specific region and create connections between its inhabitants. »

Thomas CAUMARTIN

In France, the issue has entered the public policy arena, following the path laid by the principle of regional equality. Highly eclectic, the public policies of the Ministries of Culture and National Education, as well as those of all local players - regional, departmental, inter-municipal, or municipal - are based on their respective strengths and weaknesses. The characteristics of these active entities necessarily influence the policies implemented.

So, within the Béthune-Bruay Artois Lys Romane Agglomeration Community, encompassing 100 municipalities in northern France and divided between a former mining basin and large rural areas, cultural policy is structured around directly managed cultural facilities and all related actions and programmes, particularly those linked to arts and cultural education. **Julien ROBIQUET** therefore affirms that ACE is present in almost all actions, whether they are carried out by cultural operators or by cultural development initiatives at regional level. The regional cultural action department has created a local arts education contract (LAEC), a programme established by the State and implemented locally by and with partner organisations. The objective is to work towards a genuine regional network while ensuring a balanced approach, a highly complex undertaking from a structural point of view.

Conversely, the small Municipal Community of Sept Vallées, a particularly rural area in northern France, is completely devoid of venues for live performances, with any suitable and properly equipped location being more than an hour away. Yet, there is a strong political will to develop culture and ACE. The local authority is therefore supporting a «Small Towns of Tomorrow» (STT) initiative, with the town of Hesdin-la-Forêt (population 4,500) aiming to revitalise the area and make it more attractive to its residents. As such, the town's heritage plan is relatively significant, and the STT initiative has opened up numerous opportunities related to ACE, notably enabling the acquisition of a "Micro-Folie", which has been well-received by the public. However, according to **Caroline CARDOSO**, arts and cultural education in the region relies primarily on artist residencies which, after initially being part of an LAEC, subsequently transitioned to the Rural Culture



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Contract programme, co-signed by the Department, Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs and Hauts-de-France Region. ACE thus forms a genuine cultural foundation for the region, supported by programmes implemented by the State and various regional levels.

« Our entire cultural offering is fully mobile, meaning it can set up throughout the region which, as a whole, is considered a potential stage for artistic and cultural performance. »

Caroline CARDOSO

Where cultural policy action is scarce, individual initiatives can step in. The *Chambre d'Eau*, a private organisation, is located at the crossroads of several departments and spans seven inter-municipal areas ranging in population from 6,000 to 50,000. Founded in 2001, it's an association co-founded by **Vincent DUMESNIL** and some of his fellow citizens, initially aiming to avoid the pitfalls of isolated venues where artists pass through without connecting to the local area. The decision was therefore made to invite artists to come and work across the whole region to share their experiences, feelings, needs and requirements with as many people as possible. The goal is not to bring culture to rural areas, as it's already there, but rather to focus on certain aspects of ACE, such as sharing the creative process. The *Chambre d'Eau* is therefore a space for experimentation which, approximately every five years, organises meetings at national and international level with project leaders in rural areas to advance these practices.

*« But an artist residency must be able to set up in any environment, and this idea was central to the *Chambre d'Eau* project. »*

Vincent DUMESNIL

Elsewhere in Europe, the issue of rural cultural void is a pressing concern. In Castilla y León, Spain, a region deeply rooted in rural life, cultural facilities are plentiful, and there is a strong political will to combat the drastic population decline here. The inhabitants feel no particular sense of identity or cultural attachment to the region. However, as throughout Spain, folklore and popular culture play a vital role, and cultural heritage is substantial relative to the population size. **Carlos ALONSO PEREZ** is therefore working with the region to strengthen this lack of sense of belonging and promote this significant heritage, which should help them achieve this goal.

The result of a shared decision, how can we develop and implement arts and cultural education initiatives in rural areas? The concept of cooperation is therefore central to the deployment of ACE. This cooperation, and giving meaning to actions undertaken in the field of arts and cultural education, are all the more important given the sparse population and vastness of these regions. Cooperation begins with elected officials and their ability to agree on a common framework for cultural policy. The role of local authorities (both municipalities and metropolitan areas) helps develop synergies and communication, with significant support from mediation and coordination. But cooperation also involves all structures operating within the educational, social and cultural fields,

and all the professionals who facilitate artist residencies and workshops. Identifying the various stakeholders is a substantial undertaking and often takes many years.

When a region lacks resources, **Carlos ALONSO PEREZ** believes it's important to seek support further afield, from schools, universities and various cultural organisations, for example, and build cross-sectoral collaboration. Teachers then play a crucial role. When the project leader is a private entity, the artist can be the driving force behind the collaboration. It's from and around the artist that the teams will then seek out the most relevant partners, the region being conceived as a network of people with diverse interests. Beyond institutions, the *Chambre d'Eau* project, for example, seeks the cooperation of the entire civil society, which then mobilises to identify the appropriate stakeholders.

« The implementation of ACE actions can only be effective if it involves a whole constellation of players. »

Ludovic PIARD

Local elected officials have varying levels of awareness regarding the importance of arts and cultural education, and the fact that culture is a genuine need for residents. Convinced of the value of ACE projects through successful experiences, public policies can effectively contribute to the implementation of worthwhile initiatives. However, not all elected officials are trained or aware of ACE. Therefore, for a structured, well-thought-out cultural policy, it would be advisable to train them in the cultural policies specific to their region.

In terms of funding for arts and cultural education, the accumulation of support remains the norm. Often marginal within the overall budget of large local authorities, aid to rural ACE programmes is constantly fluctuating and perpetually being questioned. This aid needs to be adaptable, but also requires strong ideological and political support, embedded in both public and private policies. When regions lack budgets, only collaborative work with all local stakeholders makes it possible to finance projects, mobility and artists. As for the issue of transportation, it's central, as the most visited regions - and consequently, the most culturally diverse - are obviously the most accessible and best served. Furthermore, covering the transport costs of schoolchildren, at least in part - when possible at the local and municipal levels - greatly promotes ACE.

« The concentration of political power around ACE projects is very strong, and can sometimes become an ambassador for ACE. »

Ludovic PIARD

Given the crucial link between arts and cultural education and transport and communication infrastructure, it's important to identify solutions for bringing culture to areas lacking such infrastructure. In this context, itinerant art, such as the *Micro-Folie*, offers a potential solution. One of the significant advantages of culture is its adaptability to various locations, provided the venue allows for genuine interaction with the public, while ensuring it avoids a sporadic, superficial approach. The principle of outreach programmes, therefore, proves to be a particularly well-suited method of cultural dissemination for rural areas.

On the ground, the development of cultural policies can become a strong support for ACE. **Carlos ALONSO PEREZ** thus confirms the absolute necessity, in Spain, of working with heritage, both in terms of architecture and folklore, since it is truly untouchable here. The challenge then lies in finding relevant ways to move it beyond its museum environment. This doesn't mean desacralising it, but making it a «personal», individual story. In this case, the collective history conveyed by heritage is indeed a key concept, as heritage can provide a genuine vehicle for understanding and appropriating a region. In France, labels such as the City and Region of Art and History label or initiatives such as *It's My Heritage* allow work to be carried out in this direction. ACE thus becomes a key element in building a shared local identity, brought to life by a large number of stakeholders, even far from major cities.

[B3.0] ACE or the exemplary nature of a universal, intergenerational public policy.

- **Camille DOUAY**, Coordinator of the Hauts-de-France Young Audience Collective
- **Isabelle JACQUOT-MARCHAND**, Head of the Lifetimes Office, Ministry of Culture
- **Cécile THIRCUIR**, Artistic Director, On-Off Company, Lille
- **Michael SUMMERS**, Director of Music Services, County Durham (UK)
- Moderator : **Charlotte BRÈS**, Deputy Head of the ACE Department, National Library of France

THE TERM «ARTS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION» CONTAINS THE WORD «EDUCATION»

This obvious assumption reveals a bias in thinking about ACE initiatives: that they are only intended for young audiences - children and adolescents. However, ACE initiatives form a continuum, from birth to adulthood. This, at least, is the true objective of public policy. Throughout life, however, these initiatives are influenced by societal issues: ACE must address all the challenges at every stage of life, for everyone. Nevertheless, cultural action does not address all audiences in the same way. The subject must first be approached from the perspective of those who lead and support these initiatives, and then communicated to the beneficiaries themselves. The management of ACE policies must therefore adapt the tools used to each stage of life so that all individuals can participate in cultural life. The environmental and societal landscape of different audiences must be taken into account. The components of life in schools, hospitals or prisons influence people's lives and cannot be ignored. In short: the challenge lies in achieving a relative universality of ACE initiatives, fostering genuine intergenerational connections.

"Relative universality" in that art and culture help constitute identity, its construction and evolution. In this sense, ACE addresses individuals who are always different, always unique, at every stage in their lives. Therefore, while the action is collective, its understanding is individual. Working by age group often proves to be the most common approach, seeking to address the specific challenges of each generation.

Thus, the «sung portraits» created by **Cécile THIRCUIR** give voice and access to artistic practices for audiences far from cultural venues, such as vulnerable individuals in nursing homes. The aim is to help them express their identity, with intimacy and emotion, by recording their words, with or without musical accompaniment. From a personal artistic gesture, the result becomes a lasting testament for loved ones. It becomes a tool for disseminating the intangible heritage of the self, moving towards a collective heritage.

At the other end of the spectrum, in County Durham (UK), a programme using singing and music has been developed to address language delays in children leaving daycare. This project resulted in the creation of a genuine active resource with various tools and practices that teachers, parents and children can subsequently reuse, even outside the school environment. **Michael SUMMERS** illustrates the sense of

« An essential dimension of arts and cultural education is to implement people's cultural rights by adapting to participants' specific needs. »

Charlotte BRÈS

community and well-being that art and culture can bring by mentioning the intergenerational choir in County Durham that brings together social workers and young people. Music, and art in general, unites people by building a shared heritage.

« Cultural practices are not just intended to position audiences as spectators or actors, but also to bring interaction and well-being. »

Charlotte BRÈS

ACE sometimes responds to needs that are neither artistic nor cultural: a project based around song and percussion helped facilitate the learning of French for non-native French-speaking students.

This approach connects cultural rights with other fundamental rights, such as identity, access to heritage, diversity and education, which must be respected and developed. The concept of «cultural health», developed by Sophie Marinopoulos, highlights the importance of artistic and cultural awareness in the cognitive development of language, but also in improving the quality of relationships between individuals, whether children or adults. Arts and cultural education therefore plays a role in the health of social bonds.

All audiences should be able to benefit from the opportunities offered by ACE. Therefore, **Camille DOUAY** and her collective met with healthcare professionals to work within maternal and child health centres (MCHCs), aiming to create a sustainable dynamic within this sector to equip artists with the tools they need to address early childhood issues. The culmination of this project was the creation of the guide *Me as a Very Young Spectator*, which is intended for early childhood professionals, artistic teams and parents alike. It also serves as an advocacy piece for the cultural health of very young children and their right to access culture.

ACE initiatives adapt to the evolving maturity of the beneficiary. If, within a broad definition of culture, ACE is defined as a means for children to grow and express their humanity, it becomes a fundamental right that must be guaranteed for everyone, at all stages in life, regardless of social status. In cultural pathways, breaks and inconsistencies should be avoided to prevent young people from developing a fragmented worldview and break down barriers between different environments among adults. It's important to address this issue with young people as early as possible. The Culture 21 network has developed an educational training kit, called Dédale, for young people to help them understand and assert their cultural rights. On a broader scale, these approaches allow us to consider all generations.

While ACE operates on an intergenerational and transgenerational level, artists whose work embodies ACE initiatives grapple with the challenge of finding a universal yet unique means of transmission. In response to this question, Cécile THIRCUIR compares ACE to giving a gift. This perspective led her, in 2013, to a home-delivery song project created with amateur singers. Based on a universal principle - a common format that can be shared in any space, from public squares to private living rooms - it allows for sincere individual expression and intimate, personal emotion, fostering openness to others. Cécile THIRCUIR also discusses how affective neuroscience has demonstrated that play is an exceptional resource for learning. Joy is a driving force to integrate into ACE to make these projects accessible and meaningful.



Moi, tout-petit spectateur - Me as a Very Young Spectator

« Artistic and cultural education aims, from birth, to provide care, create social cohesion and give everyone the opportunity to participate in social and cultural life by developing each individual's abilities. »

Camille DOUAY

The key is to build trust by also engaging with beneficiaries' communities. Cooperation among the various ACE stakeholders - teachers, parents, artists and facilitators - is essential for its success. How, then, can we support these ACE initiatives, which are both specific and universal?

We need to consider how residents view their region. Sensitive regional assessments can be conducted, involving artists, residents and elected officials, to determine what actions could be implemented. This reverses the usual logic of public policy, starting instead from existing needs. In this way, arts and cultural education adopts a shared approach and engages with the lives of all residents within a given region. To avoid reaching only those already involved in the cultural system, the regional assessment can be carried out by neighbourhood to better target where and how actions should be undertaken. Indeed, a participatory evaluation with residents helps us understand their expectations. Establishing selection criteria ensures a diverse committee during the evaluation process.

The diversity of policies supports the social cohesion fostered by ACE. Public policies must support this framework for ACE and address the limiting beliefs that hinder knowledge transmission and individual participation.

To this end, public policies are increasingly being developed in a cross-cutting manner. They are often produced through inter-ministerial collaboration and extend beyond the school curriculum. They incorporate partnerships with other sectors, such as the Ministries of Agriculture and Justice, popular education federations, and early childhood and healthcare facilities. This cooperation allows the development of a framework and guidelines that are then directly implemented in the communities where the beneficiaries live. Consequently, working with local authorities is essential to ensure the conditions necessary for this to happen.

More recently, the concept of «lifelong arts and cultural education» has led to a different way of thinking about ACE. In France, the Ministry of Culture created a Lifespan Development Office, headed by **Isabelle JACQUOT-MARCHAND**, to guide public policies from this perspective.

« Each individual must be seen as a person fully involved in the transmission of cultural life; this stance changes the way we think about cultural policies. »

Isabelle JACQUOT-MARCHAND

Culture is not an option, but a priority, and must be defended as a fundamental right. To this end, we need to establish coordinated actions at the local, regional, national and international levels.

[B3.1] ACE, a project laboratory for diverse audiences.

- **Laurence CHAZAL**, Regional Director, Judicial Protection of Young People, Somme
- **Pierre-Antoine JOLIVEAU**, Healthcare Manager, and Estelle GRUCY Occupational Therapist, Somme Public Mental Health Institution
- **Estelle GRUCY**, Occupational Therapist, Somme Public Mental Health Institution
- **Mourad MABROUKI**, Co-Director, Espace Django, Strasbourg
- **Anne MEGAN**, Mediation Project Manager, Picardy Museum
- **Claudine TOMCZAK**, Head of Diversity and Inclusion, Lille Métropole Museum of Modern, Contemporary and Outsider Art
- Moderator : **Sébastien KWIEK**, PhD student in Education and Training Sciences at CAREF/UPJV, founder of the CRE2ADO Centre, Amiens

To constantly reinvent itself with a view to better audience inclusion, could arts and cultural education be the driving force behind a policy of cohesion and brotherhood? It seems that ACE activities can be considered true laboratories for encounters, whether human, artistic or educational - in the etymological sense of the term, allowing for a «step outside oneself». Cultural institutions offer various ways to create connections and foster encounters between artists, professionals and audiences. The actions undertaken are all examples of experimental approaches with sometimes unexpected outcomes.

« The Travel Journals project allows us to create a special connection and offer the public the opportunity to step outside their comfort zone in a neutral space, through close collaborative partnerships with professionals. »

Anne MEGAN

The Travel Journals project, a partnership between the care team of CATTP Ados, FRAC, the Safran and Museum of Picardy, aims to promote encounters between «disadvantaged audiences» and works and artists, and encourage them to practise, in particular by reproducing through drawing the items observed during visits, the aim also being to give the target audiences the opportunity to feel more legitimate in visiting a museum.

The Django space, located in a disadvantaged neighbourhood of Strasbourg, supports artistic creation, including in outdoor settings and through open-air performances, aimed at young people, sometimes even in schoolyards. These encounters, part of the «artistic break time» programme for preschools, often have a catalytic effect, giving children the opportunity to experience emotion and be moved by an artist who comes to their playground. Older children are invited to participate, approximately every two months, in «urban raids» organised in social spaces serving particularly disadvantaged and culturally isolated communities, during which concerts are held, sometimes right at the foot of apartment buildings.



© Musée de Picardie

Restitution of the CATTP project at Safran

« These encounters and experiences enjoyed in public spaces leave a lasting mark on young people. »

Mourad MABROUKI

Artistic encounters can also take place within the world of young people under court order or under the care of the Child Welfare Services, who are particularly hindered in their relationship with art, often because they have also experienced academic difficulties and art is far from being a priority for them. Here, arts and cultural education is an excellent vehicle for integration, connecting these young people to their environment. The idea is not to present art to them in an abstract way, but rather always within a genuine political context. Understanding, for example, that cultural venues also host manual or technical trades can help them better see themselves in these venues. Furthermore, when a genuine encounter occurs between a young person and an artist, experience shows that they then follow the artist,

who becomes an excellent motivator for these young people, who have often been led to believe that they are not suited to culture. Helping them complete an artistic project helps rebuild their self-esteem, which has often been damaged along their path. As such, ACE also provides a special boost for the development of basic techniques and knowledge, such as writing, practising which can help these young people get out of an isolation inherent in their age or condition, and also help them give meaning back to writing.

« At first, they think art is completely meaningless, and yet they often end up finding meaning in it, especially when it's part of their environment and concrete reality. »

Laurence CHAZAL

Artistic encounters can help these young people develop constructive relationships with others, particularly with the adult world, in which they often lose trust. Artistic encounters can therefore provide access to interaction in a broader sense.

In hospitals, and particularly in psychiatric wards, culture has been present for centuries, with socio-cultural activities often being very important for patients from a therapeutic standpoint. In this case, within public mental health care, cultural policy is particularly active, notably thanks to the strong connection maintained between healthcare professionals, cultural and artistic staff, and artists. In mental health care, access to culture inevitably involves encounters between these different stakeholders, and since 2023, six ACE artists from Amiens Métropole have taken part in 12 cultural programmes. Among the many activities offered here is culinary arts, which sometimes seems less incongruous and more tangible to disadvantaged audiences than other art forms.

"We had to create a culinary landscape inspired by the Calanques of Marseille. I worked incredibly hard and gave it my all. Thank you to D. for everything she taught us, the value of cooking. Thank you." Testimonial from a young person who took part in culinary arts workshops in Marseille.

When participants are older, particularly in psychogeriatric settings, this culinary arts encounter offers an opportunity to bring back memories and foster a warm, comforting atmosphere. Families can then be invited to admire and taste the dishes prepared by patients, leading to new connections. This culinary arts experience promotes human interaction, especially since, in this artistic discipline, access to the artist is truly immediate and face-to-face. These encounters are also, of course, extremely empowering for the patients, who feel capable of artistic creation. So it's important to embrace encounters and surprises in all settings, including hospitals.

While arts and cultural education can greatly facilitate interaction, its vocabulary should not become an additional obstacle. It's important to clearly distinguish between specific, technical vocabulary, reserved for internal and administrative use, and communication with the public, which must nevertheless be expressed with the same rigour when addressing so-called «vulnerable» audiences. Establishing a horizontal rather than vertical relationship between the various stakeholders involved in a project, including the public, therefore requires a uniformity of language that encourages clear, multilateral communication, but without resorting to

ACE at the EPSM in the Somme region since 2023

6

artists

7

units
involved

12

cultural
programmes

110

patients,
aged 6 to 90

caricature, precisely so as not to create a distinction between a supposedly elitist audience and a supposedly uncultured one, especially when the objective is to demonstrate that art is everywhere. Thus, the term «disadvantaged public» should no longer be used, as it can be discriminatory. However, it is often necessary from an administrative standpoint to obtain ad hoc funding.

« It's important to play in order to challenge preconceived notions and biases. »

Sébastien KWIEK

« Not everyone can become a great artist, but a great artist can emerge from anywhere. »

Brad LEWIS

« ... including the walls of a psychiatric hospital. »

Estelle GRUCY

[B3.2] Arts and cultural education supporting regional vitality, or how to address public mobility challenges?

- **Robin DUCANCEL**, Director of Les Forces Majeures orchestra
- **Vincent DUMESNIL**, Co-director of La Chambre d'eau, Le Favril
- **Camille TOUSSAINT**, Coordinator of general and intensive cultural activities, Brabant Wallon Cultural Centre (BE)
- Moderator : **Charlotte KHERZANE**, Cultural and Regional Advisor for Lifelong Artistic Education, DRAC Hauts-de-France

Arts and cultural education is currently at the heart of a major question: how to transform the dynamics of dissemination and interaction with audiences when regions, whether rural, peri-urban or fragile urban, are beset with structural obstacles to mobility? Far from being limited to the physical circulation of works, mobility appears as an operational principle defining regional vitality itself, engaging artistic creation, citizen participation and transformation of living spaces.

Within this context, **Charlotte KHERZANE's** analysis provides a crucial conceptual step: cultural mobility does not simply refer to the movement of artworks or artists, but rather to a region's capacity to activate its own resources. She rejects the dichotomy between rural and urban areas, arguing that cultural vulnerabilities stem not from a geographical deficit, but from the absence of symbolic exchanges and sustainable cooperation. The territory thus emerges as a space for relationships, transforming mobility into an indicator of cultural power rather than a logistical response.

The approach developed by **Robin DUCANCEL** with the Les Forces Majeures orchestra illustrates this transformation: cycling is not simply a means of transport, but an artistic method. Reducing a symphony orchestra to a smaller, self-sufficient ensemble becomes a mobile creative laboratory. Mobility is no longer peripheral to the artistic project; it becomes its driving force.

« What we're looking for isn't to perform in a theatre: it's to create a project within a region, to cross it, to stay there long enough for transformation to happen. »

Robin DUCANCEL

This approach opens up a new field for ACE: interaction is no longer a moment of dissemination, but a relational process where artist and region become co-authors of a work in motion. Mobility acts here as an operator of social and symbolic transformation, deconstructing hierarchies between centre and periphery in favour of a circulation of presence and desire.

From another perspective, **Camille TOUSSAINT** locates cultural mobility within the framework of cultural rights and regional democracy. Her analysis reveals that mobility is not about «bringing people in» or «going out towards» others, but about transforming residents into active participants in a symbolic creation that belongs to them. Far from being limited to physical movement, mobility becomes an inner movement, awakening the desire to circulate, create and belong to a shared space.

« Mobility isn't just about getting from place to place; it's about connecting, about creating a desire to come, a desire to do things together. »

Camille TOUSSAINT

This understanding renews the very notion of region: it's no longer a framework within which culture unfolds, but a living system where flows of cooperation, shared imagination and co-creation mechanisms circulate. As such, mobility becomes a lever for educational transformation: it activates participation, reveals latent resources and paves the way for an emancipatory conception of cultural action.

Within this framework, the experiences reported by **Vincent DUMESNIL** underscore the importance of long-term engagement. Artistic mobility is conceived here within a logic of proximity and residency, where the artist establishes a lasting presence in a region, fostering profound interactions with its inhabitants. More than mere movement, mobility becomes presence: it's embodied in a slower pace, attentiveness to daily life, and responsiveness to local needs.

Successive interventions highlight that mobility is not just determined by artistic choices, but by economic realities, too. The costs associated with touring, accommodation, logistics and insurance require new forms of regional cooperation. These mechanisms become adaptive, based on pooling resources and shared governance, revealing that mobility is only sustainable if built on a network of committed partners.

Finally, the new dimensions of digital mobility raise questions about the boundaries between cultural experience and media consumption. While virtual spaces expand the possibilities for connection, they do not replace the sensory and collective experience that underpins arts and cultural education. Digital mobility should be considered a symbolic extension, not a substitute.

[B4.0] Making an ACE project successful: context, appropriation, the guarantees of its success.

- **Laura BANUELOS**, Project Coordinator, Teatro Real de Madrid (ES)
- **Anne-Laure GUENOUX**, Trainer, Orchestre à l'école Association
- **María GUERRERO SANZ**, President, Acción por la música (ES)
- **Emilie MALOLEPSY**, ACE Project Manager, Béthune-Bruay Artois Lys Romane Urban Community
- Moderator : **Valérie FARANTON**, Regional academic delegate for arts and cultural education

Before responding to demands to measure the effectiveness or impact of arts and cultural education actions, each operator must consider their conditions of existence and methods of deployment.

The first step is to make the right assessments. This requires understanding the audience and their needs, as well as the local cultural context within which these needs are expressed and develop. The economic and social issues, shared by institutions and funders, such as the Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs (DRAC) and Ministry of Education in France, must be taken into account. The LOVA project, which originated in the United States but was adapted by Spanish teachers, is based on teachers' observations and tailored to the specific context on the ground: here, the goal is to become an opera company. The children then develop the programme from the starting point - choosing a theme - to the final creation, which must convey a message and ideas that resonate with them. For **Laura BANUELOS**, the project is built upon their needs and objectives, without attempting to replicate the model that inspired it. The ACE project must adapt, primarily to the target audience and organisations that will implement it. Students thus learn a multitude of personal skills - intellectual and emotional - and collaborative skills, as confirmed by **Maria GUERRERO SANZ**, who speaks of a "theory of change". They develop know-how that cannot be found in books, learn to communicate with others, express themselves and work in teams. Individual and collective dynamics revolve around the presence of musicians in the school and the children's willingness to take part in the programme, she adds.

The second element concerns funding and partners: **Maria GUERRERO SANZ** believes they must share a vision and values. This is all the more crucial if the project is long-term, recurring, and part of a long-term strategy to build an artistic and cultural identity. At a time when the profession

is undervalued and teachers demoralised by difficulties they encounter in the field, institutional recognition and the organisation's ability to adapt are essential to a project's success; indeed, it has a very clear impact on schedules, organisation and education itself. To maintain motivation within the cultural operator's teams, **Anne-Laure GUENOUX** believes it's also necessary to know when to stop, even when it's working well, to propose something new. It's also important to pay attention to the children, finding the right balance between the demands necessary for success and respecting their individual pace.

« Long-term projects mean falling in love with the partner you're going to work with. »

Anne-Laure GUENOUX

The link between school and the broader social context is particularly evident, according to **Maria GUERRERO SANZ**, for whom teachers are the «master agents of change». The methodology she applies involves training and psychosocial interventions to support teachers who must bridge the gap between the intention behind the project and reality on the ground. Cultural projects can thus rebuild trust between families and the educational community: ACE is a lever for improving the school climate and combating school dropout.

The long-term timeframe is a factor to consider. Both the LOVA and the Orchestra at School projects are conceived and experienced as challenges: persevering to the end in a school environment not conducive to developing a project over such a long period, whether for the students, whose interest may wane over time, or the teachers, whose endurance may be tested. **Laura BANUELOS** believes it's possible to support the latter by helping them build a network, providing encouraging



LOVA Project - Teatro Real, Madrid

feedback and offering regular training sessions that become opportunities for discussion and collaboration.

The choice of artist is the cornerstone of integrating them and their artistic practice into a region, as well as a crucial element in the process. To enrich their practice and its transmission, artists must understand the context of the region in which they work, the audiences they interact with and which they address. Long-term residencies are invaluable in this regard, allowing artists to live and immerse themselves in the region. Art teachers are also important intermediaries, connecting students with artworks and even artists. School and arts curricula, programming choices and local dynamics can all influence the choice of artist upon whom ACE activities are based. The artist's personality also plays a significant role here.

« The artist must also want to share. »

Emilie MALOLEPSY

By becoming an active participant in the project, each individual can develop a realistic perception of their personal value in serving the group. Children feel like specialists in a particular field, and teachers, by returning to a learning role, create new forms of interaction among themselves and with their students.

This is where the funder's requirement, whether public or private, comes in: project evaluation. Despite the fear of failure, it's important to evaluate continuously in order to make the best possible adjustments. **Anne-Laure GUENOUX** identifies three elements to measure: the student's progress, the programme itself, and the factors at play within the school.

On this last point, feedback is positive. For the rest, a range of criteria must be considered. **Emilie MALOLEPSY** believes that evaluation provides the flexibility to readjust from year to year, by targeting specific themes and practices, and that these programmes must be flexible, although structured, to allow for reinvention. Each project carries its own set of problems for which solutions must be found, which is difficult but stimulating.

« We design strategies and then can extract variables that we measure throughout the year. »

Maria GUERRERO SANZ

Failure is possible, partly because the human element is central to these initiatives. A long-term perspective means we can put these failures into context. The validity of these projects is assessed over time, across several cycles. **Laura BANUELOS** finds this remark on the LOVA website amusing: «If you want to carry out the LOVA project with your class, here's our advice: don't», highlighting the difficulties inherent in an ambitious long-term project. Regardless of the project phase, maturity of a partnership or ambition of an arts and cultural education initiative, failure is, in any case, an undeniable part of the learning process.

[B4.1] ACE project and assessment: dangerous liaisons?

- **Marie-Christine BORDEAUX**, University Professor - University of Grenoble Alpes
- **Dieynébou FOFANA BALLESTER**, Lecturer in Educational Sciences, University of Paris-Est Créteil
- **Alain KERLAN**, Honorary University Professor - Education, Culture, Policies Laboratory, Lumière Lyon 2 University
- Moderator : **Raphaël ROTH**, Lecturer in Information and Communication Sciences, National Institute of Arts and Cultural Education

Questioning evaluation means questioning the very identity of arts and cultural education: is it a public management tool or a space for producing experiential knowledge and social transformation? The epistemological dimension transcends the instrumental. The PEGASE framework, conceived not as a peripheral object of study but as a laboratory for thought, reveals that evaluation shapes the very conception of an ACE project from its inception, directing what is valued, visible and transmissible.

« To evaluate is to provide precise answers to specific questions. »

Marie-Christine BORDEAUX

This formulation reintroduces the intellectual responsibility of evaluation. It reminds us that any evaluative approach involves a methodological and policy choice: what we choose to evaluate determines what we recognise as value. Far from being a neutral act, evaluation becomes an act of constructing reality, positioning ACE not as a passive object, but as a space for decisions and arbitration.

From this perspective, evaluation acts as a framing device. It guides how projects are defined, how artists fit into their regions, and how audiences are perceived. It's not a tool applied to an existing object: it's a constitutive component of the object itself.

Alain KERLAN reaffirms that ACE is based on an ethics of sensitivity and relationship. He highlights the need to embrace the subjective dimension of any evaluation, not as a methodological flaw, but as a condition of fidelity to the artistic experience.

This statement is not an admission of weakness, but a reminder of the very foundations of ACE: art produces effects on bodies, imaginations and relationships. Reducing it to quantifiable indicators neutralises its transformative potential.

Yet it's essential to situate this dynamic within the long history of cultural policies: evaluation has helped define what is recognised as legitimate in arts and cultural education, creating dominant models to the detriment of emerging or informal forms. This standardisation calls for scientific vigilance to preserve the plurality of cultural experiences.

Faced with these tensions, **Raphaël ROTH** proposes a refocusing: evaluating to understand rather than control. This implies shifting the question from «why evaluate» to «for whom to evaluate». When evaluation is directed toward the actors themselves - artists, students, residents - it becomes a tool for empowerment. When it merely feeds into reporting mechanisms, it reduces ACE to a mere administrative instrument.

In this vein, **Dieynébou FOFANA BALLESTER** advocates for hybrid methodologies that capture the complexity of projects: combining qualitative and quantitative data, incorporating participant input, and documenting processes rather than just results. Evaluation then becomes a collective space for understanding and transformation, closely aligned with what is actually happening in practice.

From this reflection emerges a shared conviction: evaluation is not an end in itself, but a theoretical tool. It constitutes the space where the future of arts and cultural education is being considered today - a future that cannot be separated from its sensitive, democratic, relational dimension.

« We must accept the idea that evaluation involves subjectivity. »

Alain KERLAN

[B4.2] Training stakeholders in ACE projects: an ongoing process, mobilising proven resources and peer networks.

- **Christian DUCHANGE**, Director, founder of the companies L'Artifice and La Minoterie, Dijon
- **Laura FIDLER**, Partnership Relations, INSPE, Lille
- **Richard HURST**, Educational Development Adviser - County Durham (UK)
- **Anne MEGAN**, Mediation Project Manager, Picardie Museum
- **Gwenaëlle SINET**, Seconded Professor from National Education, Musée de Picardie
- Moderator : **Lucie VERDEIL**, PhD Student in Information and Communication Sciences, Observatory of Cultural Policies

You're not born an ACE facilitator, you become one. Behind the quote lies a reality that's often obscured, barely raised in exchanges between institutions, cultural operators and artists: the subject of the ability to interact with an audience no longer made up of spectators, but of players in an artistic act, a cultural approach.

France has a long tradition of arts education within the broader framework of popular education. As a director of children's theatre, **Christian DUCHANGE** used national and institutional policies supporting youth-orientated creative work to develop a programme called Terrain de Jeux (Playground) in Burgundy, a region relatively lacking in such initiatives in the 2000s. The programme brought together four artists, local authorities and partner intermediaries around performances of children's shows, aiming to disseminate the work, understand each participant's expectations and challenges, and together develop a shared perspective as a spectator. Over time, the programme expanded to include facilitators - activity leaders, teachers and parents - as well as the artists themselves, who needed support to ensure meaningful, productive sessions for sharing their work directly with audiences. The training of practitioners - through practical guidance rather than purely theoretical instruction - is based on the principle of mentorship: a supportive transmission of approaches, techniques and concepts for cultural and artistic action. This principle is particularly relevant with artists, as it resonates with their sensibilities.

« The artist's role is to create opportunities for work and encounters between artists and audiences. »

Christian DUCHANGE

For facilitators, teachers and those responsible for ACE in cultural structures, more theoretical tools - scientific literature, workshops for sharing best practices, professional meetings - enable transmission, and therefore the training of those involved.

Following this tradition of educational structure, the Museum of Picardy was a pioneer in its region by welcoming «teacher-liaisons» within its walls. The interdisciplinary nature of these teachers allows for long-term project monitoring and encompasses the entire arts and cultural education pathway from preschool to high school. Connections are established between primary and secondary school teachers, representing a wide range of subjects such as mathematics, history, French and visual arts. Projects are co-developed and can take various forms depending on teachers' needs. The museum thus adapts to all audiences, whether students or those with limited cultural exposure.

Training ACE practitioners is not, however, being overlooked by political and institutional decision-makers. In England, local authorities are developing cultural education partnerships with organisations and stakeholders in their area - cultural, academic, artistic, educational, etc. Education and cultural education specialists have sought to improve the quality of the activities in which schools are involved. The Durham Commission on Creativity and Education, led by members of Durham University, studied the situation to establish priorities and best practices. The commission thus provided guidance for the design and implementation of ACE activities, which then had to be passed on to practitioners.

« Cultural education activities should not just be a source of well-being and personal growth, but engaging and accessible to all to develop creative knowledge as well. »

Richard HURST

As part of the cultural education partnership, an educational training programme was developed, involving the introduction of a representative in schools to promote culture - what Richard HURST calls a critical friend. Their role is not to carry out ACE activities, but evaluate them, encouraging teachers to rethink their approach to ACE, consider new activities and involve new partners. The goal was both to improve the quality and increase the quantity of activities.

Beyond the individuals working daily in schools, ACE training also requires a regional network and professional development support for these teachers. ACE often relies on individual initiatives, so it's important to network stakeholders to encourage the creation of projects and teach their implementation. In the Lille Academy (France), the National Higher Institute for Teaching and Education (INSPE) organises training courses called Arts and Cultural Education Pathways (ACEP) for all trainee teachers to introduce them to the ACE approach. In this training, **Laura FIDLER** also emphasises the importance of experience on the ground, particularly developing projects in collaboration with artists, in a spirit of complementarity among stakeholders. The programme raises awareness of cultural training and teaches participants how to identify the different organisations in the sector and their roles. DIPS 2 (Initiation, Practice and Awareness Programme Level 2), funded by the Amiens metropolitan area and aimed at primary school teachers, also allows this support for projects, linking teachers and artists from diverse backgrounds.

Teachers don't always have the necessary skills for certain ACE projects, but they can learn which resources to contact to meet their needs. Practical application is integrated into the training. This can be an artistic or methodological exercise related to a specific organisation. The training allows teachers to better understand ACE and feel confident in developing projects. Another aspect to consider in ACE is the complexity of different regions and audiences.

« ACE training is above all about cultural awareness and openness to others. »

Laura FIDLER

Following the same principles, the Museum of Picardy is committed to the ongoing professional development of teachers through educational workshops focused on its collections and presentations in primary and secondary school vocational training programmes. Similarly, each year, teachers from the AEFÉ (Agency for French Education Abroad) visit the museum, where liaison teachers present them with teaching resources they can adapt. Teachers need support, training, and sometimes reassurance to feel confident in their role. The goal is to prepare them to lead independent visits where their students are active participants in the session while receiving guidance.

« ACE projects are real levers that motivate students and give meaning back to learning. »

Gwenaëlle SINET

Teachers don't always know who to contact to develop or support an ACE project. Cultural institutions can act as intermediaries, helping to identify artists, organisations, cultural operators and funding sources. Before the ACEP training, for example, a booklet listing cultural partners is provided, explaining their role, activities, and how to develop an ACE project. This information is crucial to prevent teachers from becoming discouraged, especially since their role is essential in ACE. Teachers must be equipped to replicate projects by adapting their approach to specific needs, with a focus on inclusivity. Those involved in ACE must move beyond stereotypical, top-down models and prioritise inclusion and discovery. Teachers work to empower their students to engage with and participate in culture. The most valuable lesson of ACE is that it transforms not just students, but those involved in this education as well.

« The challenge of ACE training is to support without imposing a rigid structure. »

Lucie VERDEIL

The three pillars of arts and cultural education are always present in these activities through exposure to artworks and artists, hands-on practice in cultural venues and at school, and students' acquisition of knowledge. The venue and artists adapt to the material and scheduling constraints of the classroom. They provide knowledge and tools that can be reused in future projects. The teacher knows the students and curriculum, and makes sure the workshops are suitable for the class, taking into account any specific difficulties and needs. Supporting ACE involves a need for integration and translation between different, sometimes separate worlds, a necessary sharing of experiences and knowledge, and finally, networking across different regions to connect diverse approaches and perspectives, **Lucie VERDEIL** explains.

« Chance dictates that our paths are not solely the result of our predetermined circumstances. Arts education for all is a way of embracing chance. »

Christian DUCHANGE

[C2.0] When the principle of co-imagination with beneficiaries is incorporated into the development of an ACE project.

- **Vincent DUMESNIL**, Co-Director, La Chambre d'eau, Le Favril
- **Isabelle JACQUOT-MARCHAND**, Head of the Lifetimes Office, Ministry of Culture
- **Alain KERLAN**, Honorary University Professor - Education, Culture, Policies Laboratory, Lumière Lyon 2 University
- **Pascal NEVEUX**, Director of FRAC Picardie
- **Cécile THIRCUIR**, Artistic Director, On-Off Company, Lille
- Moderator : **Chloé BOURGEOIS**, Artistic Creation and Cultural Practices Officer, Hauts-de-France Region

« At the heart of arts and cultural education, co-creation is not an add-on: it is its very DNA, the living essence that connects artists, teachers and residents in a shared act of invention. »

Chloé BOURGEOIS

In recent years, the term «co-imagination» has gradually become established in discussions surrounding arts and cultural education. At first glance, the word might seem like a simple addition to the continuum of participation-co-construction-mediation. However, in both practical experience and institutional consideration, co-imagination offers a broader perspective: it's a working method that combines a longer perspective, active listening and shared responsibility among artists, teachers, public stakeholders and residents.

Far from being mere rhetoric, this concept points to a concrete reality: the most fruitful cultural projects are no longer those conceived remotely, but those built within the very fabric of a region, by the people who live there. Co-imagination does not seek to impose a form: it creates conditions. It does not prescribe content: it supports a process. It rests on a simple conviction: for art to be truly emancipatory, it must be conceived with, not for, people.

In the historical model of French cultural policy, action is often structured around a three-pronged approach: intention, programming and dissemination. This framework, shaped by the Malraux legacy, has democratised access to works of art. However, it is now showing its limitations: it struggles to engage certain audiences, recognise local cultures and meet contemporary educational expectations, which are centred on experience and participation.

« Art became a daily component of the educational journey. »

Alain KERLAN

Co-imagination breaks with this prescriptive logic. It proposes an alternative methodology based on shared time, experimentation and dialogue between disciplines. The case of the Les Escholiers de la Mosson middle school in Montpellier offers an exemplary demonstration of this.

Faced with structural academic challenges, the school decided to place art at the heart of its educational strategy. Not as a tool, but as a space for transformation. A multidisciplinary team was formed: volunteer teachers, a drama coordinator, choreographer in residence, local cultural organisation, and later, an associate philosopher. The project spanned three years, with weekly workshops in dance, writing, drama, music and visual arts.

The unique aspect of this approach lies not just in the amount of time dedicated to it. What truly transforms the teaching dynamic over time is the active involvement of the teachers. Regularly released from their duties to participate in the workshops themselves, they experience creative expression, engage with their own personal interpretations, and refine their professional practices in a non-academic setting. Debriefing sessions become spaces for collective reflection where feelings, hypotheses and analyses are shared. The project evolves as it progresses, constantly adjusting between initial intentions and lived realities.

This approach highlights a fundamental tension: school operates according to a segmented, metronomic timescale, while the artistic experience mobilises a continuous, open, sometimes suspended time.

« Co-imagining means creating spaces where this other temporality can exist. Far from being a luxury, this extended timeframe is a condition for success. »

Alain KERLAN

One of the structuring principles of co-imagination is listening. Not protocol listening - that of consultation meetings - but in situ, prolonged listening, which takes into account resident knowledge, local uses, discreet practices and singular accounts.

This is demonstrated by the project conducted in Thiérache, where **Vincent DUMESNIL** supports long-term artist residencies. Even before any funding application, a collective of artists, teachers, community leaders and social workers undertakes a full year's immersion in the local area. This intentionally non-productive approach allows for the accumulation of detailed observations: participation in village festivals, informal interviews, questionnaires, meetings with socio-educational stakeholders and exploring social spaces.

From these materials emerged a word, omnipresent in the residents' discourse: «greenery». This seemingly innocuous term actually crystallises a relationship to the landscape, housing, horticultural practices and rural identity. The collective then decided to build the project around this thread: exploring gardens, creating a popular botanical collection, mobile visual arts workshops, drawing walks and on-site activities in domestic vegetable gardens.

This dynamic illustrates an essential dimension of co-imagination: "it isn't a theme applied to a region, but a region revealing a shared subject". The role of artists is less about proposing a specific idea than following a movement emerging from the ground up. The role of institutions, for its part, is to guarantee the conditions for this freedom, which the Carasso Foundation facilitated by granting an unconditional "advance of confidence" to a comprehensive programme.

« Our project was selected based on an idea that took shape through interaction, not the other way around. »

Vincent DUMESNIL

Within an institutional context where projects are too often designed to meet administrative requirements, this trust constitutes a political act. It recognises that collective development is work in itself, and that the process can sometimes be more valuable than the result.

Co-imagination is only fully effective if cultural institutions are willing to rethink their approach. The FRAC Picardie (Regional Contemporary Art Fund) demonstrates this. Rather than arriving with a pre-established proposal, its team has chosen an immersive, co-creative approach.

« It's impossible to claim to work with a region without accepting the need to learn its codes and customs. »

Pascal NEVEUX

In the Coquelicot region, the FRAC has established a «citizens' council» made up of residents with diverse backgrounds: fishermen, seamstresses, footballers and gardeners. Together, they imagine what form the artistic presence could take. Contemporary art is introduced not as a body of work but as a means of connection: drawing walks, ceramics workshops, visits to vegetable gardens and themed meetings. Residents become co-responsible and co-producers. In effect, «their daily experience becomes a resource, not a variable to be adjusted».



La céramique / Le Zèbre, July 2025, Bray-sur-Somme / Ceramics workshop with artist Antoine Medes

In the Oise region, with the travelling exhibition *Détours*, the approach is similar: the FRAC doesn't simply implement a programme. It builds an inter-municipal network, bringing together elected officials, volunteers, community leaders, artists and residents. This project fosters exchanges: mixing heritage sites, towns and artistic practices. Contemporary art is no longer conceived as an object to be transmitted, but as an opportunity for mutual transfer between social worlds.

« Co-imagination thus gives rise to another way of conceiving cultural mediation: not as a vertical transmission of knowledge, but as a negotiation, a shared space where everyone contributes part of their expertise. »

Pascal NEVEUX

These steps are not insignificant. They reflect a broader transformation, now enshrined in law, particularly through cultural rights, as **Isabelle JACQUOT-MARCHAND** points out. These rights, introduced into French law, affirm that everyone has the right not only to access culture, but to participate in its definition as well. This conceptual shift entails a profound change: «The State and local authorities are no longer merely producers of mechanisms, but guarantors of the conditions for genuine participation».

Thus, cultural institutions are invited to rethink their practices:

- setting up youth councils in theatres and museums;
- festivals entrusted to groups of teenagers;
- participatory programming committees;
- residencies based on the needs expressed by residents;
- ACE projects based on shared educational responsibility between artists, teachers and social players.

This development requires a *"shift away from a top-down, supply-driven approach towards a supportive one"*. It also requires a change in evaluation criteria. The results of a co-imagination project are not measured solely by the number of participants, hours worked or final outputs. They are reflected in the transformation of relationships, collective ownership, and how individuals take ownership of the project to make it a lasting resource.

« Cultural policies must therefore provide a sufficiently flexible framework to allow for these approaches. »

Isabelle JACQUOT-MARCHAND

This involves promoting periods of immersion, supporting exploratory phases, accepting methodological uncertainty, assisting stakeholders in administrative set-up, and valuing collective learning as much as artistic achievement.

Co-imagination doesn't just change projects; it transforms professions. It demands not only technical skills, but relational, ethical and political ones, too. Artists must learn to work immersively, listen and rephrase. Teachers must be willing to share educational responsibility. Cultural mediators must embrace unconventional approaches, far removed from traditional formats. Social workers are discovering art as a resource for support.

This requires ongoing, cross-functional, integrated training. Skills can no longer be considered in isolation. Teams must learn to build a shared narrative, manage divergent timeframes and articulate institutional constraints and resident dynamics.

Within an institutional framework, there is a temptation to produce «toolkits». But co-imagination rejects uniform solutions. It requires contextualised approaches, adapted to each region. The challenge is not to define a reproducible method, but guarantee favourable conditions: trust, time, listening and the ability to adapt.

From these experiences, a vision emerges: co-imagination is less a new concept than a renewed way of doing cultural policy. It proposes a relational, contextualised, progressive approach that respects human timescales. It transcends the opposition between experts and the public to foster a community of projects.

For cultural institutions, the challenge is clear: to guide rather than prescribe; support rather than impose; recognise rather than correct. Co-imagination is not a weakening of cultural ambition: it is its contemporary condition. It allows the artistic project to be truly shared, and therefore sustainable.

In an era marked by social and regional division, this way of working represents a demanding but necessary path: that of a culture that's not merely accessible, but becomes co-produced, co-thought out, and co-inhabited. A culture that, fundamentally, belongs to those who live it.



[C2.1] Design the scenography of a space or an exhibition to facilitate interaction with the public.

- **Marion AMBROZY**, Exhibition Production Manager, Institute for Photography, Lille
- **Zoé JOARLETTE**, Artist-Guide-Teacher, ART BASICS for CHILDREN (BE)
- **Noé KIEFFER**, Artistic and Cultural Transfer Officer – Institute for Photography, Lille
- **Katrin MÜLLER**, Head of Audience Development, Lille Metropolitan Museum of Modern, Contemporary and Outsider Art
- Moderator : **Claire LEFORT**, Head of Heritage Services — Project Manager, City of Art and History, Tours

The Charter for Arts and Cultural Education takes as a fundamental principle that arts education must be accessible to all. Knowledge, artistic practice and encounters with works and artists are possible in numerous ways, and exhibitions are just one entry point here. Addressing the subject of a venue's scenography therefore means considering an entire ecosystem dedicated to culture. Organising space to foster encounters between cultural objects and the public requires the mobilisation of diverse skills: from multimedia design to lighting installation, including the manipulation of certain content.

Exhibitions and cultural spaces in general are increasingly seeking a form of universality: to touch everyone in their sensitivity and culture, regardless of their age.

The design of the space plays a major role in mediating between the artistic gesture and creation of the artwork. Projects involving modifications and renewal of the space are key moments for such reflection. At the LaM (Lille) as at Art Basics for Children (ABC, Brussels), the environment is designed to encourage workshops, hands-on activities, contact with materials and multidisciplinary practices. The French museum drew inspiration from the practices and designs of the Belgian workshop in terms of tools for young audiences.

The principle of making the public feel «at home» has become essential, a given, for many venue managers. The work carried out at the Lille Institute of Photography provided an opportunity to create a Family Space with the aim of promoting public well-being to better convey the works and their message. The ergonomics of a space must adapt to the public's needs, including physical ones, taking into account both body and mind. That's why it's necessary to constantly adapt spaces, as is the case for ABC, which functions like a laboratory. The necessary framework is combined with a rare flexibility and freedom, encouraging the subjectivity of mediators and visitors alike.

To create a sense of familiarity with the space, it's important to have a presence, not to guide excessively, but to welcome. The visitor becomes familiar with the setting, both unusual and everyday, which then allows them to experience it independently. This welcoming moment is essential for creating a collective energy, while still allowing space for the uniqueness of each individual experience.

This association between individual freedom and collective sharing is evident in the recent joint project between ABC and LaM, which focused on artists' language and artistic writing. Their teams collaborated with the team at the host venue, La Ferme d'En Haut, which lent its space while the LaM was closed. The approach fostered the involvement of

« For us, the layout is the third educational tool: there's the collection of books and materials, there are the people - our team, guides, the public - and then there's this layout which is there to support them. »

Zoé JOARLETTE

everyone present, resulting in a shared mediation process integrated within the available space, while still allowing each mediator the freedom to work in their own way with the group they were guiding.

The product of these experiences at the intersection of scenography and transmission also allows for the exploration of itinerancy, particularly through exhibitions outside the museum walls. For example, the project *L is for look*, developed over several years around a documentary collection on young people's photography, showcases a variety of approaches and proposals.

« The main challenge was to make it clear that mediation would be part of the exhibition experience and not confined to a separate, workshop-style teaching space »

Noé KIEFFER

Discussions with ABC highlighted the practical aspects of setting up a travelling exhibition designed with this approach in mind. **Marion AMBROZY** confirmed the need to design this project with modularity in mind: adapting to the venues, successfully integrating not only the artwork itself, but the mediation tools and furniture designed around these works as well, to allow the public to feel as comfortable as in their own living room.

Security considerations must also be taken into account, with all the limitations that entails: placing fragile artworks and objects to be handled side by side, for example, requires someone to be constantly present in the room, which isn't always feasible. Language barriers are another factor to consider for an exhibition that travels to multiple countries. These obstacles and limitations necessitate ongoing adaptability and dedicated time for communication with the various teams involved.

These projects challenge the traditional view of an exhibition, with its linear guided path. According to **Claire LEFORT**, the aim is to reconcile two objectives: preservation of the collections on the one hand, and hosting the public on the other, with reassuring approaches that demystify the cultural institution and make culture familiar and accessible. **Katrin MÜLLER** confirms that practices have evolved: curators and mediators now design projects together. And since «artistic practice is important at every stage of life», targeted projects will be implemented at LaM to offer a different way of experiencing the museum, aimed at children on Wednesdays, and seniors for «Silver Fridays». This type of offering can coexist with exhibitions that speak to everyone: **Zoé JOARLETTE** is convinced that adults can find value in an exhibition even if it's designed to be experienced at a child's level. Modularity allows for different levels of interpretation and complexity. Targeting children is also a way to reach the adults they bring with them.

The practice of mediation is driven by these two objectives of universality and inclusion: seeking the tools to make works accessible to everyone, regardless of their situation, disability, age or knowledge.



Exhibition Fais-moi signe (Give Me a Sign) - LaM/ Art Basics for Children / Ferme d'en Haut Villeneuve d'Ascq

[C2.2] Design and renew events by placing ACE at the heart of the project economy.

- **Laura BANUELOS**, LOVA Project Coordinator, Teatro Real de Madrid (ES)
- **Ikbal BENKHALFALLAH**, Director of Safran, Amiens
- **Pascal MERIAUX**, Director of On a marché sur la bulle, Amiens
- **Antoine MANIER**, Director of Audiovisual Encounters, Lille
- Moderator : **Gwenola REGNAULT**, Deputy Director of Cultural Action and Heritage, Amiens Métropole

An event should not be conceived solely as a highlight detached from reality, but as a form of ongoing cultural organisation, too, embedded in time and the lives of residents. The event becomes an architecture of relationships, a method of artistic presence within the region, engaging the body, participation and construction of a shared imagination. It's less about attracting an audience than creating situations for artistic encounters, circulation and symbolic co-presence.

A project never springs from nothing: it's conceived, developed and evolves within its context. It addresses a specific region, so it must originate from that region. It listens to what the region has to say. So it was with this strong local understanding that Le Safran, a cultural centre in a disadvantaged neighbourhood of Amiens, a city that pioneered arts and cultural education in the 1990s, launched the Safran Numérique festival. The main pillars of ACE - seeing, meeting and practising - were already the foundations for building the centre's project, encompassing performances, exhibitions, workshops, meetings and participatory projects. These pillars also serve as the basis for the Safran Numérique project: combining live and digital arts, engaging young people, and so on. The objective of grounding the event in the principles of ACE was to avoid ghettoisation - what Stiegler calls proletarianisation. The festival blended works housed in major museums with other, more popular, fun pieces not yet part of institutional collections, avoiding any notion of consigning heritage to a dusty museum. The festival emerged as an organic extension of the local area, activating cultural rights in their most tangible form.

« *The idea was precisely to reach people who haven't inherited what Bourdieu calls cultural capital ... with the aim of implementing not just cultural democratisation, but cultural democracy.* »

Ikbal BENKHALFALLAH

Based on these statements, the festival redefined itself as a space for symbolic justice. **Ikbal BENKHALFALLAH** does not conceive of the event as a top-down offering, but as a process of civic engagement: art becomes a right, not a privilege. Le Safran is organised around a positioned logic (12,000 participants, 40 installations, 80 active mediators, 130 workshops in all types of structures and spaces) where ACE is not peripheral, but constitutes the backbone of the cultural project. The structure does not plan to «bring in» artists, but «bring to life» the artistic experience at the heart of the social fabric. Arts and cultural education is thus fully integrated into the institution's mission.

The constraints of the event's location can generate original ACE initiatives. During one edition of the videomapping festival organised by Rencontres Audiovisuelles (Lille, France), access to one of the projection venues in Saint-Omer required navigating a bottleneck. A space for interaction and hands-on experience was created for this area, with tents housing workshops, video projectors and software that the public could use for a few moments or minutes. Positioned in a public space, this arrangement could reach the general public and familiarise them with videomapping, a relatively new creative medium. Similarly, at another edition, a work about monsters was commissioned for the church in Meurchin, near Lille. To prevent it from frightening children, all the town's classes took part in an outreach activity at the media library, including on-stage demonstrations and awareness sessions for accompanying adults, too. This ACE project was central to the event: without it, the artwork would not have enjoyed the same reception - it might even have been withdrawn. The monumental scale of the projections is not intended for spectacular effect, but rather to activate an understanding of the local context: artist residencies, workshops in community centres and resident participation in the creative process. Video projection becomes a language of symbolic co-production, engaging public space as a place for collective learning.

ACE activities, carried out in the lead-up to the event, help increase its visibility, generate interest and so boost attendance. Those who benefit from these pre-event ACE activities become ambassadors for the event.

The economics of a project often involve carefully considered choices regarding arts and cultural education policies. One approach is to opt for an innovative, highly inclusive project where audiences are integrated and actively involved. The LOVA project (Madrid, Spain), for example, invites students to create an opera. The goal is not so much to produce a work as to cultivate the artistic and creative spirit of participants. Neither is it about cultural consumption, but rather creative participation. The festival is no longer a showcase for dissemination, but a matrix for civic production. The school becomes an event producer, forging partnerships with other organisations, particularly in financial terms. As such, parents and teachers become cultural players. Beyond its highly integrated approach to audiences, the LOVA project demonstrates the importance of involving educational and societal partners from the very beginning of projects.

« The structures within a region, such as schools, can become cultural centres within the community, creating original cultural content that's locally relevant. »

Laura BANUELOS

Long considered an antithesis, the involvement of the public in the creation of events is evolving. The event itself is no longer conceived as a simple panorama of creations to be consumed. It must be a moment where shared cultural references, cultivated throughout the year, come together in exchanges between participants - spectators, partners, students, artists, etc. Taking the time to engage with the public is a gamble. In this sense, mediation is an increasingly used tool, particularly in the lead-up to the event, involving the use of mediators during the event, but especially in the planning stages. This can represent 20 to 25% of the project budget. In addition to boosting local employment, this approach allows for the recruitment of people sometimes far removed from the professional cultural sector: students, educators, facilitators and local residents. The ambition of the event is conveyed to them, the works are presented to them, with the aim of making them ambassadors. In this way, the very organisation of the event becomes an act of cultural and artistic education.

The choice of partners is made early in an ACE project. The evolution of partners contributes to the evolution of the event itself. The case of the comic book festival «On a marché sur la bulle» (Amiens, France) illustrates this: from its initial partner - a regional bank - the festival subsequently received support from public bodies, which asked it to invest in educational outreach activities, particularly for young people. This, in turn, led to ACE initiatives becoming a fundamental principle of the festival, ranging from entrusting exhibition curating to audience members, to hands-on workshops and communication by young people. In 2024, this represented 850 half-days of educational interaction. ACE became an integral part of the event's DNA, a marker in the memory of local residents, as well as artists.



Rendez-vous la bande dessinée 2025 / 2025 comic book festival

The comic book festival is not conceived as a celebration of authors, but as a space for creation and experimentation, where young people become practitioners of artistic forms and storytellers of their own worlds. Here again, ACE unfolds as a method, not an addition. For **Antoine MANIER**, a work evokes an emotion that invites participation in a workshop, influencing the participant. But ACE can also go so far as to awaken vocations, with some people moving from amateur workshops to professional training, whether technical or artistic, with professional creation as their ultimate goal. This dynamic can therefore also be considered within the scope of ACE.

On the subject of the event, a central idea emerges: the festival, the celebration, the highlight, are no longer defined by their temporality, but by their capacity to establish a sensory space. Whether digital, graphic or performative, they become educational structures, frameworks for empowerment and agents of cultural democracy. ACE ceases to be a mere add-on or peripheral tool: it becomes the very logic of Culture.

« This blend of event planning and education was brought to us by the world around us. »

Pascal MERIAUX

[C3.0] ACE - media and information literacy: working together to address contemporary challenges in the world of images.

Round table preceded by three workshops:

WORKSHOP 1

Artificial intelligence and creativity: opportunity or threat for image and media education?

- Elise TESSARECH, Director of Image and Creative Technology Education at Forum des Images
- Clément VIEL, Representative of the SYNAPSE association
- Samuel WAHL, Journalist, author

WORKSHOP 2

Media representations and the construction of imaginaries: deconstructing stereotypes

- Stéphane GERARD, Author, director, history of images
- Yohann KOUAM, Author, director, image education speaker

WORKSHOP 3

Images and propaganda: deciphering visual strategies

- Vincent BATICLE, Film teacher
- Lucas ROXO, Journalist, documentary filmmaker, media and information education speaker and trainer
- Amandine KERVELLA, Lecturer and researcher in Information Sciences, GERIIC0 Laboratory, University of Lille

Coordination :

- Clémence BOULFROY, Director of the CARMEN association
- Pauline CHASSERIEAU, Managing Director of ACAP
- Mathilde DERÔME, Coordinator of extracurricular activities/regional image education centre, ACAP

AI everywhere, truth nowhere? Is this really the problem with arts and cultural education? The cultural sector, however, continues to grapple with the contemporary challenges posed by AI in relation to images, as well as the role of images in representations, especially stereotypes. These issues lie at the intersection of ACE, visual literacy, and media and information literacy (MIL). While some images can now be manipulated, decontextualised or distorted, even without the use of artificial intelligence, AI itself seems worryingly out of control. It seems crucial to collectively consider how to act - or not act - to adopt a proactive approach and address the anxieties and demotivation sparked by the proliferation of AI. In this regard, it's important to remember that the term «intelligence» means «information», so replacing human intelligence may not yet be on the agenda.

The impact of images and their manipulation is an age-old subject. Film and journalism schools have been exploring this avenue for many years, particularly as part of propaganda studies. One of the major developments in cinematic language (including the concept of montage), which truly brought cinema into being, took place in the Soviet Union in the 1920s. At that time, all the great Soviet filmmakers, having understood that meaning arises from the juxtaposition of images, began experimenting with montage. With Eisenstein, the step towards propaganda was definitively taken when he managed to reinvent and reorganise reality through montage effects. Similarly to montage, the commentary that accompanies images is perfectly suited to influencing, or even altering, their meaning, according to **Vincent BATICLE**.

In workshops such as the one led by author and director **Stéphane GÉRARD**, analytical tools are combined with discussions on the messages conveyed by the examples studied. The exercise leads to questioning the link between image and ideology, and therefore an analysis of the role and political scope of cinema, as well as towards the hypothesis of a possible emancipation of audiences through art, which precisely aligns with one of the objectives of ACE.

« In my opinion, poetry is the best antidote to stereotypes. »

Yohann KOUAM

One of the tools of activist imagery is stereotyping. Analysing a collection of images on a given subject reveals the choices made by creators to address that subject. In this way, the images reveal all these choices, the existing images; analysis, in turn, reveals the missing, hidden images - and with them, the hidden truths, the unspoken messages. While it reveals stereotypes, the collection also reveals images of the struggle against them. At the heart of this fight against stereotypes, the invisibility of female directors is a striking example, according to **Stéphane GÉRARD**, as is the construction of a degraded and degrading image of the suburbs, according to **Yohann KOUAM**. By speaking in film schools and other educational institutions, explaining that all of a filmmaker's decisions serve a specific intention and message, Yohann Kouam provides educational tools for interpretation and understanding, while allowing the audience to form their own interpretation of the images. Educational actions help counter these deliberate constructions to restore everyone's place in the artistic, intellectual and conceptual landscape of new generations.

« Some objects are sometimes a more relevant reflection of the political climate than artistic creation. »

Stéphane GERARD

The deconstruction of stereotypes through cinema can involve a shift in perspective, frustrating viewer expectations by not showing the «caricatured» images that audiences expect in a given context, or by referencing fantasies rather than negative memories. A filmmaker must also consider whether they have unconsciously internalised the codes embedded in traditionally disseminated images. Analysing these images can lead to rich, profound debate arising from these shifts in perspective that cinema can generate by diverting images from the stereotypes with which they are generally associated.

« The richness [of a work] often arises from the gap between the audience's level of interpretation and the filmmaker's intentions. »

Yohann KOUAM

The sheer volume of images already produced but never viewed is staggering. The rise of YouTube and social media has fuelled this interest in both the production and consumption of moving images, including older ones. While media literacy is important at any age, it's even more crucial for generations born after this emergence. The appearance of images - both still and animated - generated by artificial intelligence not only enriches but also overwhelms this mass of existing images, reinforcing the need for a critical understanding of them.

For **Clément VIEL**, AI is worrying because the average person doesn't understand its inner workings. Each component of AI takes a piece of information and processes it mathematically according to its own specific characteristics before passing it on to the next component. AI is simply a set of operations involving the multiplication of vectors and matrices; we must therefore avoid anthropomorphising AI: it's purely mathematical, not sentient. However, at the end of the process, it is indeed the human who provides the vectorisation lines, describes the input of a network, and decides on the required output. AI is therefore in no way exempt from human intelligence and is neither unknown nor magical.

Media literacy has clearly embraced AI. Workshops offered by specialist organisations, such as the Forum des Images (Paris, France), combine theory and societal reflection with practical application, aiming to demystify the use of AI. **Elise TESSARECH** asserts that supervised use, accompanied by critical thinking, can be quite beneficial, depending on the situation. It's interesting to note that generative AI is already so prevalent in our daily lives that we often use it without even realising and, consequently, without any particular worries.

« There's nothing like putting the object being criticised into practice to develop critical thinking. »

Elise TESSARECH

Lucas ROXO, a documentary filmmaker, worked with high school students on the topic of young people's digital representations on social media. The goal was to create a fictional, computer-generated influencer representing the students' diverse identities and narratives. The Instagram account associated with this influencer then reflects what the students wanted to highlight, leading to a deeper analysis of the various types of content on social media, the realities they reflect, and a broader discussion on the fact that social media likely only reflects a part of ourselves and a distorted image of who we are.

« In this case, we created fake material to allow students to understand how fakes are created so they can better identify them, particularly on social media. »

Lucas ROXO

A proper understanding of AI requires cultural adaptation to our ways of working, appropriating specific vocabulary, and public education. In France, 80% of middle and high school students use AI, compared to 20% of teachers: the generational divide is clear. The need for boundaries is increasingly pressing, whether legislative, temporal or related to its uses. So an AI monitoring committee has been created by the Forum des Images, with the aim of moving beyond existing journalistic and verbal framework documents to develop a number of practical recommendations. The ambition is to consider the issue of AI in a more comprehensive, holistic way, and integrate it into the ethical and environmental contexts from which it cannot be separated.

« While many significant differences remain regarding AI, (...) dialogue and pauses for reflection are all the more necessary to support its emergence. »

Samuel WAHL

Supporting parents and teachers in helping young people understand social media and empowering them to take responsibility for its omnipresence is crucial. According to **Amandine KERVELLA**, raising adults' awareness of how to analyse images ensures that their discourse, often repeated by their children, is critical and appropriate. While parents may not always have the resources, they clearly express a need to guide their children. The role of teachers and public authorities must therefore alleviate parental guilt and empower them in educating their children about images and screen time. All of this must be done without encouraging the manipulation of images.

« It's equally important to destigmatise social media, which can also provide spaces for self-expression, empowerment and the capture of political discourse not always visible in traditional media. »

Lucas ROXO

While programmes like Arrêt sur image, one of whose aims was precisely to help adults decipher images, are disappearing, organisations such as SYNAPSE offer «Deciphering Happy Hours» for adults. Access to information deciphering resources for adults is scarce, which is regrettable in terms of civic responsibility - especially given that, contrary to popular belief, working-class people are no more easily influenced than others.

According to **Amandine KERVELLA**, the permeability between what falls under media and information literacy and ACE offers important, relevant opportunities for cooperation and adapting educational proposals to the different target audiences, the central question being that of how to support the public in their different image practices.

Therefore, whether the issue concerns image manipulation, media stereotypes or counter-propaganda - that is, the deconstruction of political discourse - media and image literacy only works when the public understands how these images are constructed, how they can be deconstructed, and how to reclaim them. Consequently, this image literacy must be an integral part of ACE objectives. Indeed, today, the political battle is also fought as a form of cultural battle and a struggle for control of narratives and representations, hence the imperative need to educate the public in image analysis, especially in an era where the internet and digital media are heavily dominated by certain schools of thought.

From the perspective of analysing practices and evaluating ACE initiatives, it's as important to consider what happens in the workshops provided as part of ACE as it is to consider the effects they produce. Evaluations cannot and should not be limited to quantitative elements, which are often reductive, but rather should highlight elements of resonance, connections created between participants, and activation of a certain degree of civic engagement.

While some concerns associated with social media or AI stem from the fact these technologies are often owned by corporations perceived as seeking to deprive their users of critical thinking and material power, it's important not to be swayed by this sentiment. Indeed, a number of political regulators exist through which it's always possible to act to limit the power of these corporations. It's equally important to remember that checks and balances have always existed, and to have faith in the collective urge to retain our free will.

That's why all these topics should not be reduced to their potential danger, but rather approached from a much more positive perspective. Any danger can be addressed through creativity, action, expression and the application of critical thinking, without stigmatising any audience, whoever they may be, especially when they are subjected to numerous contradictory demands, as is the case with young people today. Arts and cultural education therefore has an extremely important role to play, and it's essential we continue fighting to ensure that the meaningful projects it envisions come to fruition.

« Many political battles involve cultural wars fought over narratives, most often in visual form.. »

Amandine KERVELLA

[C3.1] Arts and cultural education, or the imperative catalyst for a culture of science and technology.

- **Raphaël DEGENNE**, Director of Ombelliscience, Amiens
- **Caroline GHIEUNE**, Managing Director, ARTE Education
- **Alain KERLAN**, Honorary University Professor – Education, Culture, Policies Laboratory, Lumière Lyon 2 University
- Moderator : **Eric AUBERT**, Project Manager for Artistic Creation and Cultural Practices, Hauts-de-France Region

The link between arts and cultural education and scientific, technical and industrial culture (STIC) is now a key issue in public cultural policy. This link is not simply a juxtaposition of fields; it redefines the very way in which a society produces, transmits and democratises its knowledge. What's at stake here is less a matter of cultural supply than a paradigm shift where aesthetic experience becomes one of the favoured pathways to a scientific understanding of the contemporary world.

From this perspective, the approach developed within the Ombelliscience network, combined with the work of **Raphaël DEGENNE**, proposes an interpretation of STIC as a continuous ecosystem between knowledge production and citizen engagement. STIC does not refer to a specialist field, but rather a form of shared culture that mobilises museums, media libraries, universities, fab labs and science centres within a regional network designed to make the scientific process itself accessible.

« The idea is to share scientific knowledge ... as well as share the process, to show how we know what we know. »

Raphaël DEGENNE

This perception is part of an international context marked by global warming, the collapse of biodiversity, scarcity of natural resources and disinformation, all issues which make the collective appropriation of science essential.

Within this framework, ACE appears not as a support, but as a catalyst for transformation. It introduces into STIC the dimensions of imagination, narrative and sensory experience, allowing us to move beyond a strictly didactic approach to science and reveal its human dimension. ACE does not popularise; it connects. According to this conception, science is not understood solely through data, but through the capacity to experience how it transforms our understanding of the world.

The audiovisual analysis conducted by **Caroline GHIEUNE** through the EducArte platform provides a key illustration of this shift: when video addresses environmental, technological or social issues, it does not transmit knowledge in a top-down manner, but rather engages students in an active, reflective, participatory role. Collaborative exhibitions in media libraries, films produced by high school students and masterclasses between artists and scientists demonstrate that the image becomes a space for thought where science is transformed into narrative.

STIC thus takes on an aesthetic dimension, in that it engages perception, attention and wonder. This conception aligns with philosophical perspectives according to which scientific and artistic experience stem from the same movement of wonder. The work associated with **Alain KERLAN** demonstrates that the distinction between humanities and sciences is not inherent, but a historical construct.

« Science can be taught, but it doesn't meet the deep educational needs ... only poetic experience touches on what truly educates. »

Alain KERLAN

This close relationship is brought to life in art-science residencies, where artists and researchers work side-by-side to explore scientific phenomena using sensory devices. Experiments conducted at the Théâtre Hexagone or in artistic fab labs demonstrate that creation does not intervene downstream from science, but rather reveals its symbolic presuppositions. The artistic approach does not comment on science: it reveals its hidden imagination.

In industrial and post-industrial areas, STIC also becomes a tool for memory and foresight. Reinterpreting technical heritage through arts and cultural education allows for the transformation of industrial wastelands into spaces for civic debate. When integrated into a cultural mediation project, the mining basin is no longer merely a heritage site; it becomes a platform for reflection on development models, ecological transitions and collective identities. Artistic mediation situates industrial history within a tangible temporality, fostering a deeper understanding of scientific and technological issues among local communities.

Within this context, STIC cannot develop without the involvement of ACE. Science outreach initiatives such as the Science Festival, mobile laboratories and science libraries demonstrate that the public's experience is not passive: it must be actively engaged through embodied, narrative, participatory mediation. The use of video, scenography and creative workshops shows that students understand science better when they practise it as a language, rather than as a fixed body of knowledge.

This approach also raises the issue of cultural rights. While every individual must have access to scientific culture, they must also be able to participate actively in it. STIC is not simply

about providing information; it involves recognising each person as a subject of knowledge. ACE offers this framework for empowerment by giving the public the opportunity to co-produce a work, question a system, and debate a scientific hypothesis.

However, this momentum is hampered by institutional tension. Most existing programmes remain compartmentalised between educational and cultural funding, which limits the emergence of hybrid projects. There are still few structured programmes that allow high school students to access laboratories or participate in art-science creations during school hours. The ambition to create «apprentice-researcher» programmes in the fields of scientific cinema or digital arts reflects a need for greater convergence between these two fields.

The Ombelliscience network, presented by **Raphaël DEGENNE**, attempted to foster connections between universities, cultural centres and local authorities, but funding mechanisms and calls for projects remain too fragmented. Teachers highlight the lack of coordination between scientific stakeholders and cultural advisers in primary education. Those working in the field criticise the weak response to certain STIC outreach calls, not due to lack of interest, but to insufficient methodological support.

Despite these obstacles, initiatives are increasing. Digital media libraries, sound engineer residencies, artistic programmes in scientific settings and cross-border collaborations demonstrate that scientific imagination is becoming a field for cultural mediation. When STIC is conceived as an experience rather than a transmission of knowledge, it aligns with the fundamental objectives of arts and cultural education: developing discernment, stimulating curiosity and building shared narratives. STIC then appears not as a mere juxtaposition of disciplines, but as a space for culture in the fullest sense, where scientific knowledge is experienced through wonder, practice and debate.

[C3.2] ACE in the face of environmental challenges.

- **Elise DEBERGUE**, Climate Change Adaptation Officer, Sustainable Development Resource Centre
- **Julie JET**, Educational and Cultural Manager, Amiens Metropolitan Zoo
- Moderator : **Serge CHAUMIER**, Professor, Head of the MEME Master's Programme, University of Artois

Our relationship with nature is deeply cultural, in the anthropological sense of the term. Therefore, its protection and preservation require raising awareness and involving citizens and the public.

«We can only truly defend what we know. We can only fight for what we have learned to love.» - Gaspard BALANCE

What would arts and cultural education look like in a world in ruins, plagued by cataclysms, generating chaos and conflict? For **Serge CHAUMIER**, environmental issues should not be limited to the single question of climate change, given the multitude of interconnected societal, political, health-related, agricultural, economic and behavioural topics. Can art and culture allow us to adapt to, resist and come to terms with this looming catastrophe? In this sense, we need to rethink our cultural models by working on narratives and imagination, and consequently, on culture itself, going beyond a simple school-based approach to ACE. Environmental education, which must be integrated into cultural education, concerns all segments of society, and in particular, «elites and decision-makers», not just schoolchildren and young audiences. The seriousness of environmental issues requires us to rethink our cultural policies and methods of analysis and transmission.

A testing ground for educational and cultural initiatives focused on biodiversity preservation, Amiens Métropole Zoo, an urban park, explores our relationship with living things and the environment. Numerous programmes are in place to connect with all audiences and provide tools for interaction and, eventually, action.

«ACE is involved at all levels of existence.»

Julie JET

Tailor-made projects, student programmes, engaging events, scientific lecture series and open mediation are offered as a system to foster encounters, curiosity, interest and reflection - in short, to empower visitors to become active participants in their own environment. For example, an escape game experience has been in place since 2019 to address important topics through gamification, an impactful scenario, and player involvement that prompts reflection on personal perspectives. Following this fun experience, a facilitator reviews all the concepts covered. «The initial feedback is quite positive», highlighting a growing sense of connection. Next year, there is a need to assess «whether this remains with the audience once the initial excitement has subsided», explains **Julie JET**. Indeed, learning through play gets the public engaged and, consequently, involved.

Another key player directly involved in environmental issues is the CERDD (Sustainable Development Resource Centre), located in the heart of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais mining basin. Its objective is to equip and accelerate transitions in the Hauts-de-France region and address the impacts of climate change. While not directly engaged with the general public, the centre focuses more on the production and promotion of technical, documentary and bibliographic resources, as well as the dissemination of data on the state of observed changes. Its initial purpose was primarily scientific and institutional. Recognising that this traditional approach was insufficient, a project using storytelling and imagination was initiated to reach diverse audiences through ambassadors.

«We need to completely rethink our vision of exchanges and the notions of values and service through new narratives, so that everyone can take ownership of these issues.»

Élise DEBERGUE

Starting in 2021, co-design workshops were launched to gather feedback from the Centre's stakeholders and identify their gaps, needs and, ultimately, their understanding of support for the ecological transition. One unexpected theme emerging from these discussions concerned the need for positive narratives and lived experiences, rather than alarmist, unhelpful pronouncements that ultimately prevent action. The Archipel Histoire de s'adapter (Archipelago: A History of Adaptation) project, implemented in 2023 in the Pays d'Opale and then the Beauvaisis region, offers a twelve-to-eighteen-month journey within a specific region. This journey alternates between institutional exchanges and, more importantly, artistic missions through artist residencies. For example, the work of photographer Lionel Pralus highlighted the emotions and feelings of various stakeholders on the ground, emphasising, among other things, the direct transformations of their regions. The podcast project Archipel à l'écoute des territoires (Listening to the Regions) gives a voice to residents experiencing climate change. The two-month artist residencies facilitate encounters and exchanges that are expressed through visual arts, live performance and theatrical and poetic elements - all tools and levers for realising the story of a region based on the accounts and feelings of its inhabitants and users.

These actions have helped highlight elements for understanding the issues facing the communities in question, as well as involving residents in their region.

So, how can an arts and cultural education project become part of an eco-responsible approach, which can prove complex? While **Serge CHAUMIER** highlights the difficulty of acting in concert on different levers within a globalised system where various interdependent constraints come into play, **Julie JET** questions how to convey a message if «you don't live and practise it yourself». In this sense, and as an example, Amiens Zoo has partnered with a recycling centre to reduce its carbon footprint and is trying to limit its use of paper materials.

Finally, the question of digital technology in transmission and learning, which remains a contemporary blind spot in view of energy and resource challenges, needs to be vigorously questioned.

Artistic storytelling and questioning our cultural models are essential for collectively rethinking the relationship between nature and culture and, more specifically, for understanding environmental realities. By integrating these narratives, we can react and act, translating current ecological and sociological concepts in an accessible, engaging, collaborative way. These concepts are too often presented through a worrying, distant scientific and technical lens, thus disconnecting the subject from its object. The aim is to transmit, through artistic means or cultural education, keys to understanding, connection and inclusion that will, consequently, facilitate more informed, calm and productive behaviour in addressing these unprecedented realities and challenges. In short, it's a story of culture.



Archipel à l'écoute des territoires: the podcast that gives a voice to residents experiencing climate change
(Produced by Studio À la phonie !)

LOOKING BACK

Showroom area

Partners present over the 3 days to host school groups for workshops and conference delegates:

On a marché sur la bulle

2 workshops to discover the world of Manga and its writing, or of comics through the creation of a few comic strip panels.



CIAP - Centre d'Interprétation de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine (Architecture and Heritage Interpretation Centre)

Through a sensitive, tactile approach, discover the region's building materials, from raw material to finished product: architecture, which has to be composed and decomposed.



JASA - Jardin Archéologique de Saint-Acheul (Archaeological Garden of St-Acheul)

Escape game: the mysteries of Prehistory. Take on several challenges by stepping into the shoes of an archaeologist to discover the Prehistory of Amiens.



Amiens Métropole d'Art et d'Histoire (Amiens, City of Art and History)

Maze, a game to discover cultural rights. Cultural rights form an essential compass in the fight against discrimination and for living together.



ARTE Éducation

Discover the Karambolage digital tool, the cult ARTE programme that humorously dissects the small differences between French, German, Spanish and many other cultures.



ACAP - Regional image hub

MashUp Table workshop, a device that makes video editing intuitive and fun, by removing technology in favour of creativity.



ART BASICS for CHILDREN

A fun lab at the crossroads between art and education. A laboratory of aesthetic experiments promoting the development of creativity and artistic awareness through a whole range of tools.



Preview of the exhibition

«At the School of Maurice Choquet»

8 Oct > 22 Dec 2025 – Maison de la Culture d'Amiens

In partnership with the Frac Picardie, Maison de la Culture d'Amiens, town of Allonville and the Maurice Choquet association.

Info: www.maisondelaculture-amiens.com





©Laurent Rousselin - Amiens Métropole

This exhibition is not an exhibition. It's not about artists or artworks, but a rare and exceptional archive that spanned the second half of the 20th century of which we now present a remarkable selection.

This unique educational adventure is thanks to Maurice and Lucette Choquet, teachers between 1954 and 1977 in the modest school of Allonville, a small town in the Picardy countryside about ten kilometres from Amiens. This adventure is all the more exceptional because it has been passed down to us through the will and commitment of several former students, who founded the Maurice Choquet Association in 2002 to preserve this heritage comprised of hundreds of drawings, collages, tapestries, ceramics, wood engravings and iron sculptures created by Maurice Choquet's students from 1954 to 1977, as well as precious documents, school notebooks and photographs taken by Bernard Vincent.

Beyond this multifaceted, high-quality body of work, produced with limited resources, and the invaluable testimonies of his former students - now the bearers of this legacy and yesterday's participants in this remarkable story - Allonville Town Hall possesses a rare archive that reveals much about Maurice Choquet's vision of teaching the fundamentals and his open classroom, a true collective workshop and repository of a bygone era. Above all, it was about inventing and imagining a new ideal of school, one that would

support empowering, creative learning, firmly departing from the traditional educational system and drawing on his own artistic practice. Maurice Choquet did not hesitate to reconfigure the classroom, aiming to stimulate psychomotor skills and autonomy while developing a sense of community, cooperation and mutual support. Through the lens of teaching the fundamentals inextricably linked to artistic practice, Maurice Choquet implemented an active, participatory, student-centred educational approach. He envisioned a learning environment where each student can express themselves, take responsibility, cooperate, experiment and open themselves up to the world. A fascinating collective experience that stimulates listening, observation and empowerment. These are all windows onto a world near and far, encouraging students to connect with others, embrace difference and explore diverse approaches.

This genuine educational revolution is evident today in the achievements of students who attended this village school, where a couple of teachers profoundly and lastingly influenced generations. A remarkable story of transmission imbued with humanist values, set in the quiet of the Picardy countryside.

Pascal Neveux,
Director of Frac Picardie

Orchestre à l'école concert

by the students of the Georges Quarante School in Amiens, accompanied by Noam Duboille and Marc Drouard. Excerpt from the show Transmission(s).



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Presentation of the residency-mission work of the Racines Carrées Company

With the participation of students from the Regional Conservatory



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