EXPLORING ARTS ORGANIZATIONS AS A CATALYST FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
The purpose of this project was to examine the arts as a positive change agent for community development. Exploring how and for what purpose nonprofit arts organizations can create social capital can provide insight on how the arts industry can be a leader in the transformation of communities and regions around the globe. The perspectives of artists, community developers, sponsors and beneficiaries of the arts provided insight on how and in what ways the arts can evoke change by building connections and inspiring participation. Community development theorist Bhattacharyya (2004) distinguished community development from related fields such as economic development and social work by highlighting its ability to build solidarity and create agency. For Bhattacharyya, solidarity means trust and relationships where community members can work together for change. Once united for a cause, agency means the implementation of the group's goals. To explore the multiple ways which the arts can inform community development change for leaders, two case studies were conducted. Insights came from data collected for each case through key informant interviews and organizational website analysis.

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Organization Catalyst Community Developments Society. Region Vancouver & Victoria, BC. Area of impact Affordable housing. "Because the rental development at Dockside Green is below market-rate, it will allow families that would otherwise be frozen out to find housing they can afford," says Kira Gerwing, the Vancity manager of community investment who worked with Robert to set up Catalyst. The project is backed by Vancity financing.