

MuseumsForward

Indigenizing the Cultural Sector: Museums and Change

Lena Ishel Rodriguez

Abstract

The events of 2020 had a huge impact on the arts and cultural sector, leading to calls from the public for non-tribal organizations to be more inclusive and responsive and for major structural change. Despite the plethora of resources and Indigenous models and frameworks available, the arts and cultural sector is struggling with how to implement the resources available to better serve their communities. Related to this greater cultural shift, there is increased funding available for DEAI and Equity work through specific grant allocations. The purpose of this research study is to understand how practitioners working in urban arts and culture organizations implement Indigenous ways of knowing and practices of Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility to further Anti-Racist and Anti-Colonial practices within King County organizations.

Keywords

Anti-Racism, Anti-Coloniality, Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility, Indigenous

Committee Chair

Dr. Meena Selvakumar

Committee Members

Dr. Christopher Teuton; Priya Frank

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Introduction

The summer of 2020 is considered a time of major racial awakening in the 21st Century for the United States - one that inspired widespread protests and demands for accountability, justice, and major systemic change (Chang et al., 2020; Worland, 2020). The events of 2020 also

proved to be pivotal in broadening the conversation across the museum sector, revealing the weaknesses of Western and Colonial models, and the need for more organizations to engage in change (Drew, 2020). While Western museums are widely accepted historically and currently serve as tools of Western Colonization and White Supremacy, it was only recently that museums have shifted to functioning as “civic educator[s]” and grappling with Anti-Racism and Anti-Colonialism (Andermann and Simine, 2012). This “awakening” to systemic racism and the complicity of museums caused museums all over the world to examine their role in the public and be held accountable for their past and continued injustices (Drew, 2020). Arts and culture organizations have become progressively more aware of the repercussions to resisting change. As a result of the events of 2020, museums faced protests from the public, artists, and their own staff (McGlone & Smee, 2020; Aima, 2021). Museums have also become more aware of the potential gains to becoming more inclusive and responsive environments such as increased access to funding and better community relationships through engaging with Anti-Racism and Anti-Colonialism (Grants, 2021; Luce, 2021; Kenney, 2021). New initiatives like Change the Museum (Rami, 2020), in addition to the existing resources like *Museums as Sites for Social Action Toolkit*, *The Empathetic Museum Framework*, *Incluseum Blog*, *Museum Hue*, *Museums are not Neutral*, and *Decolonize this Place*, have been shared across the community with renewed urgency highlighting these issues in media and at conferences all over the country (Lott, 2020). On June 1, 2020, during the 2020 resistance, the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) released the following statement:

The museum field not only has a responsibility to ask the hard questions and learn from each other; we have a unique duty to listen, to chronicle the lessons and histories of our communities, and to educate future generations so that we might stop this senseless violence (Lott, 2020)

Related to this greater cultural shift, the local government of the Greater Seattle Metropolitan area allocated a sum of \$20 million in grants to the local arts and culture sector to support their reopening in the wake of Covid-19 and that are inclusive in engaging with the public through mass gatherings, particularly historically disenfranchised groups (King, 2021). This commitment to Anti-Racism, Anti-Colonialism is particularly important when the last two centuries of historical work has been predominantly Eurocentric and male in the United States and one that parallels (or mirrors) the overall lack of diversity amongst museum

staff and issues of inequitable access (Mellon, 2018; Bishara, 2019; Morgan, 2020). The connections between museums as cultural bastions and tools of Western Colonization and White Supremacy makes commitment and investment essential in ending violence and harm against Indigenous communities and their practitioners (Morgan, 2020).

The city of Seattle is one of the top ten areas within the United States with the largest Urban Native population with 29 federally recognized Coast Salish tribes (US, 2019; American, 2020; Native, 2021). The 1855 Treaty of Point Elliot recognized the sovereignty of the Coast Salish signatories and promised environmental, educational, medical access and benefits from the United States Government and governmental organizations in exchange for the cessation of their lands in what is now King County (Duwamish, n.d). However, these promises have never consistently been followed through by the county over the last 167 years (Duwamish, n.d). Despite this, Coast Salish tribes have continued to live, thrive, and assert their sovereignty (Washington, 2020). As recently as 2020, Indigenous peoples have contributed \$5.7 billion, equivalent to approximately 6% of the total, to the Washington state economy (Washington, 2020). Indigenous peoples have had and continue to have a profound impact in many sectors in the state of Washington and King County (Washington, 2020). Many cultural institutions benefit from the partnership with permanent Native American Advisory Boards, such as at the Burke Museum of Natural History (Burke, n.d).

Beyond the Seattle area, Indigenous scholars, museum practitioners, community members and activists have developed a considerable body of work outlining how non-tribal organizations can better develop relationships and environments with and for Tribal members and other Indigenous peoples (Grande, 2004; Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2009; Sleeper-Smith, 2009; Lonetree, 2012; Pirbhai-Ilich et. al, 2017; Smith-Morris, 2019; Montejo, 2021; Smith, 2021). As a social movement and epistemology, decolonization in the Americas has a history as long as colonization but gained more widespread recognition in the United States during the 1960's with the American Indian (AIM) and Civil Rights Movements. Native and Tribal founded organizations have existed and survived since time immemorial to serve their communities using Indigenous practices and frameworks including ones relevant to education as detailed here.

The article, FIRST NATIONS AND HIGHER EDUCATION: The Four R's — Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility by Verna J. Kirkness and Ray Barnhardt is one such framework and can be used to develop and evaluate Indigenous culturally responsive/inclusive environments. This

framework has been successfully used throughout the Americas and abroad, particularly in Canada (Harris, 2004). This framework was originally intended for use by colleges and universities to combat the fostering of a toxic culture that historically has led to “low achievement, high attrition, [and] poor retention of Indigenous peoples in higher education (Kirkness and Barnhardt, 1991). As museums and other public, non-profit arts and culture organizations are now understood to be informal educational spaces and historically serve as elite spaces this framework could be helpful for arts and culture organizations in King County and will be used as a framework within this research. Respect in this framework is defined as holding Native peoples, their ways of being, and their knowledge as not only valid but essential. Relevance is described as creating an environment that is responsive to Native peoples’ interests and needs. Reciprocity is the idea of fostering healthy and equitable relationships within a community. Responsibility is explained as developing a culture of solidarity, leadership, emancipation, and empowerment (Kirkness and Barnhardt, 1991).

A recent example of the impact of incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and practices in arts and culture organizations in the Seattle area is the partnership between yəhaw’ Indigenous Creatives Collective and the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture at the King Street Station. yəhaw’ was founded in 2017 and based on the Lushootseed story of Lifting The Sky, as told by Vi taqʷšəblu Hilbert. The 2019 exhibition at King Street Station titled yəhaw’ consisted of hundreds of artworks from over 200 Indigenous creators from all over Washington State with 80% of funding going directly to participating artists (Projects, 2022). During its six-month run it was seen by over 8,000 visitors. The success of yəhaw’ at King Street Station led to the collective becoming a 501(c) 3 non-profit that has supported over 400 female and two-spirit/queer artists and generated over \$2 million in additional opportunities (Projects, 2022). The 4 R’s can be seen in yəhaw’ at King Street through its centering of Indigenous peoples, their stories, community, and solidarity.

Another framework used in this research will be the Continuum on becoming an Anti-Racist Arts and Cultural Organization adapted by Kathy Hsieh that is currently in use by the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture as of April 28, 2022 (Hsieh, 2022). According to the continuum, the decentralization and dismantling of white supremacy and racism in an organization is essential to developing an organization that is transformational: inclusive, joyful, adaptive, authentic and community centered. Like the goals of the 4 R’s, Anti-Racism and Anti-Colonialism are centered in the goals of creating healthy and equitable

environments through major cultural change. This resource outlines a spectrum of organizational cultural development from an Exclusive Segregated Organization to an Inclusive Transformed Organization on a scale of 1-6. 1 is a exclusive Segregated Organization, 2 is a Passive Status Quo Organization, 3 is a Symbolic Multicultural Organization, 4 is an Evolving Anti-Racist Institution, 5 is a Structurally Changing Organization, and 6 is an Inclusive Transformed Organization. See Appendix A for the Continuum. In King County, organizations that apply for grants from 4Culture must self-identify their placement on the continuum as a part of the application process.

While the number of Anti-Racism and Anti-Colonial resources have grown in recent years and are gaining more recognition amongst non-indigenous practitioners and non-tribal affiliated organizations, much less is known about what is being implemented. The lack of understanding of whether and how Indigenous ways of knowing and practices are being implemented in non-tribal organizations creates problems in the identification and establishment of best practices. Recent studies based in Seattle on the topics of Anti-Racism, Anti-Coloniality and Decolonization and their practitioners have focused on the emotional labor and socio/emotional impacts of this work on museum professionals (Echavarri, 2021; Meister, 2021). Studies have also been case study oriented on various short-term initiatives prior to the summer of 2020 (Castle, 2021; Mathison; 2021). The problem that this research thesis focuses on is the lack of information related to the implementation of Indigenous ways of knowing and practices long term in the wake of the summer of 2020. The purpose of this research study is to understand how practitioners working in urban arts and culture organizations implement Indigenous ways of knowing and practices of Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility to further Anti-Racist and Anti-Colonial practices within King County organizations.

It is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do organizations relate to Decolonization, DEAI, Anti-Racism, Anti-Coloniality work because of the events of 2020?
2. Are organizations incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and practices like Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility into their institutions to further Anti-Racism and Anti-Colonialism?
3. Are organizations building long term relationships with Indigenous communities?

4. Are organizations changing and decentralizing Eurocentric and Colonial frameworks?

This study can help provide other practitioners and organizations within and outside of Washington State examples of how and if arts and culture organizations are implementing the 4 R's in the wake of the events of 2020.

Definitions

Anti-Colonial: Opposing Colonial rule and structures

Anti-Racist: Opposing racism, racialized and white supremacist structures

Indigenous: Earliest known inhabitants of a place that are native to it

Urban: Human settlement of high population density

Eurocentric: A worldview centered on Western civilization

Colonialism: The imposition of cultural values and practices not native to a people and the systematic exploitation of their resources

Reciprocity: fostering healthy and equitable relationships within a community

Respect: holding Native peoples, their ways of being and knowledge as not only valid but essential

Relevance: an environment that is responsive to Native peoples interests and needs

Responsibility: a culture of solidarity, leadership, emancipation, and empowerment

Methods

This study utilizes a case study approach to explore how four arts and culture organizations in King County incorporate indigenous ways of knowledge and practices in their approach in becoming an Anti-Racist and Anti-Colonialist organization. Qualifying factors for a study site included the following: arts and culture based, located in King County, and recipient of the 2021 King County 4Culture grant. Individuals interviewed were listed as the contact person on the grant application; this information was provided through 4Culture, the funding organization, for this study. Data collection was primarily through interviews with museum professionals from various departments

within each organization that received funding for a specific department or project through the King County Grant. Interviews were approximately 30 minutes and recorded. Interviews were then followed by Q&A and resource sharing session. During this resource sharing session, individuals were asked to identify their organizations placement on the Continuum on becoming an Anti-Racist Arts and Cultural Organization. The 4 R's and the Continuum on becoming an Anti-Racist Arts and Cultural Organization will be used to identify qualitative data from interviews. The data collected from this research will remain anonymous and be summarized in this article. Information shared by the individuals was verified through researching each organization's respective website.

Site A.1

A performing arts organization that serves over 50,000 young people yearly with public educational programming with an annual budget over 2 million.

Site B.1

A specialty culture and arts museum with an annual budget of over 3 million.

Site D.1

A non-profit art museum with over 1 million visitors annually and an annual budget over 30 million.

Site E.1

A non-profit local heritage museum with an annual budget over \$100,000.

A 5th site was interviewed (C.1) but was later omitted due to being a Native foundation.

Positionality Statement/Land Acknowledgement

The researcher is a Queer, Latin American of Indigenous Nahua descent. She was raised on the unseated territory of the Kumeyaay people in San Diego, California and is second generation American through her father. During the development of this study, she was a master's student at the University of Washington, Seattle in the Museology department and a museum practitioner. She lived, learned on Coast Salish Land, and would not have accomplished what she has without the sacrifices and help from family, friends, and mentors. During her time on Coast Salish Land, she received a Tribal Government Training from Lisaaksiichaa Ross Braine and engaged in

research on the history and cultures of the many Coast Salish people who continue to live and thrive today. She would like to acknowledge the ways in which she has benefited from the labor and sacrifices of Elders before her and honor their contributions.

Results

1. How do organizations relate to Decolonization, DEAI, Anti-Racism, Anti-Coloniality work because of the events of 2020?

Organizational Response to the Events of 2020

All organizations cited the last few years as watershed moments. Three sites specifically mentioned George Floyd's murder as inspiration for undertaking initiatives related to Decolonization, DEAI, Anti-Racism, Anti-Coloniality work and taking steps to shift organizational culture. A.1 described this shift as "The George Floyd murder broke our hearts. We saw that we were doing harm...And we wanted to be a positive force in changing the world towards a much more compassionate and empathetic world." All the organizations were inspired to better their outreach and relations with Black and Indigenous communities. All the organizations also stated their hope in the arts and culture sector to better connect with Native communities, particularly in King County. B.1 described it as:

There's just so much rich history in our backyard that we need to be exploring. And the only way to do that is to reach out to people and make connections. And heritage is an extremely important thread that connects all of us. So why not start there.

This change and growing interest in developing a responsive and community centered organization was a shared one that was also inspired by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The initiatives undertaken with the funding assistance from 4Culture are as follows and were verified:

A.1: "We've set up a Residency Program which is something we did last year and we're doing again this year and it is happening again in the years to come. The program is about reaching out to only BIPOC artists that are in the Northwest area. Whether you're a dancer, director, writer, visual, artist, choreographer, whatever creator you are, we are offering a residency to Eight

people for this year but there were 11 the year before... and bilingual LGBTQ shows.”

B.1: “We have a program called [REDACTED]. And what it does is it basically records [people] that now live here, and they talk about their upbringing or this and that.”

D.1: “We created a board equity task force, like after George Floyd's death, starting in maybe like September 2020. The task force was comprised of the board members and maybe some key staff. You know, another thing about the board is we elected our first Black female chair.”

E.1: “So what I have seen of Decolonization practices here at the museum has really focused on the exhibit side of things. I've tried to shift a lot of things like focusing on specifically Black and Indigenous organizations when we're doing event planning and catering and things along those lines and really where we are right now, I think we have the ability financially to impact, at the very least, organizations for services.”

Terminology and Mission

All the organizations shared that their organizational values, mission or vision were in line with equity before the events of 2020, but these four organizations are unfamiliar with specific terminology and best practices for Indigenous ways of knowing and practices, Anti-Coloniality, Anti-Racism. A.1 illustrated this as: “when it comes to Decolonization and Anti-Coloniality, which I can't even pronounce. I don't know.”

All the organizations also struggled on having a strong, consistent stance on all organizational levels as shared by E.1: “the (REDACTED) museum has not really developed a better understanding [of] our mission, our values and our vision, frankly, of how to effectively or appropriately integrate all of these ideas into it.”

DEAI Expertise in Staff and Consultants

Three of the organizations cite specific individuals as leading equity work within the last two years at their organizations, and letting recent outreach, exhibitions and programming be guided by DEAI consultants. Three organizations have created new full-time positions around

Decolonization, DEAI, Anti-Racism, Anti-Coloniality work. This was verified on the organizations' websites. B.1:

You know, we got a new director...she has a really long title, and she has done a really fabulous job bringing in more diverse artists, so I think the I think that we're doing really great things moving forward and trying to showcase diversity.

B.1 also shared that despite the new position created, there is still organizational tension and challenges in undertaking equity work: "We still have an older mentality. And with that comes, I would say, more conservative views on different things. I think for us there is a line."

This "line" and limitations to the amount of equity work that staff can undertake was echoed by A.1:

We're being more open, more accepting but I noticed a lot of white fragility is happening. I've read that book or part of it. And I realized that White People are afraid their culture will be diminished instead of expanded. I think I've tried to get through to them as much with as much kind of thinking as I can. But there are many, many walls that are up out of fear.

Amongst the interviewees most shared feelings of pressure to personally push for more equity in their respective organizations and felt a lack of support but experienced individual growth for their projects. Site E.1:

So last year one of the first things that I got to do was meet with a number of Indigenous people, some of whom were down there, some of whom had other identities and putting together a co-curated exhibit that had a lot of different elements into it, but it was really wonderful for me, was just getting to meet all of these community members and have other opportunities for me to make connections and talk with a new group of people about what there might be and how the museum can fit into that.

2. Are organizations incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and practices like Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and

Responsibility into their institutions to further anti-racism and anti-colonialism?

Indigenous ways of knowing and practices in organizational practice.

Most of the organizations were not familiar with the specificities of Indigenous ways of knowing and practices and the ways they can manifest all the 4R's organizationally on all levels either by choice or ignorance. During the interviews, the interviewer provided a description of the 4 R's and the many ways that they can manifest organizationally. Subjects were also asked if pre-existing organizational values, mission, and long-term projects could be in alignment with any of the ideas connected to the 4 R's on a consistent and regular basis. A.1 described it as "Indigenous ways of knowing and practices have never been a part of our journey." Three sites shared that they are aware they know they need to do better: E.1: "I guess I am interested in the regular and consistent ways that that Reciprocity exists, but as far as I can tell, we really don't have anything established as of yet to really encourage that." These organizations also shared that if Indigenous ways of knowing and practices are present, they are limited short-term projects in front facing departments (i.e exhibitions, education, and public programming) or collections/archival processes. D.1:

One thing we have consistently done is always have Native peoples in the care and conservation of artwork. We have a collections manager that spearheads this and as long as she has worked here, she has been working with tribes to figure out the best way to responsibly care for and store the objects.

3. Are organizations building long term relationships with Indigenous communities?

Initiation of long-term relationships with Indigenous Communities

Three of the organizations began building relationships with Indigenous communities in the last two years and have implemented one or two of the 4 R's. A.1: "We are aware and reaching out to our Indigenous neighbors. The (redacted) Tribe has reached back to us to support our work with the BIPOC community." E.1 shared that within the last two years they worked directly with Elders: "We do have relationships with Elders. And so based on their permission, there are objects that we have on display."

A.1 stated organizational improvement in taking steps to form a working relationship and the struggles to establish trust:

We are aware and reaching out to our Indigenous neighbors. We're looking to find ways to connect and support as many storytellers as possible because that's what we do, and we also create. So, we're trying but the hard part is developing trust. The hard part is that the indigenous tribes don't know about us. They don't. I would be reticent if I was part of a community that had been marginalized for so many centuries to reach out to the people who marginalized us. I'd be very cautious. So I think it's going to take some time for us to develop trust with all the tribes.

4. Are organizations changing and decentralizing Eurocentric and Colonial frameworks?

Staff continues to be predominantly white and the organization Eurocentric.

Four of the organizations self-reported as being predominantly white. D.1 shared: "We are not Native led. We- I feel like we have greater representation in the museum in comparison to other organizations in King County. But we are not a tribe. We are still a nonprofit art museum." While interested in equity work, organizations are struggling to be welcoming places for Indigenous peoples. B.1 spoke to this tension: "I'm proud of where the museum is going. I think it's going to take us a long time. I think there's going to still have to be some pretty big changes. But I'm appreciative of a lot of the work that the city of Seattle and King County and even some of Washington state is doing." E.1 shared about how it views the responsibility of organizations:

I think that our responsibility is recognizing the history of museums in general and recognizing our history and how that coincides.... The white, institutional, and white individual responsibilities for the world being what it is today in terms of climate action and justice.

Discussion

The purpose of this article is to explore how arts and culture organizations in King County are incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and practices with an Indigenous informed equity lens. The

following discussion will summarize the results of the study and provide suggestions for the betterment of equity work in King County.

All the sites and professionals interviewed are invested in Decolonization, DEAI, Anti-Racism and Anti-Coloniality. All sites were impacted and inspired by the events of 2020 to initiate varying levels of change at their organizations. However, most of the organizations are limited in implementing one or two of the 4 R's if not unfamiliar with all the specific ways Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility can manifest. This is supported by Morgan (2020) on the struggles of the development of inclusive, responsive cultures within arts and culture organizations as being hindered by established cultures of Eurocentrism and White supremacy.

Most of the staff are hopeful that organizations will change, but they understand that change will take time to establish trust and relationships with community members. Most of the organizations understand that change will only be accomplished with the development of meaningful relationships and collective effort rather than the efforts of a single staff member or consultant. Within the last few years, the subjects interviewed disclosed an increased sense and pressure to foster a culture of Responsibility, and as a result are in the initial phases of developing Relevance and Reciprocity within their respective organizations. For example, A.1 reaching out to local tribes, D.1 and E.1's collection and exhibition processes, and B.1's efforts to diversify staff. These efforts tend to be focused on the public side of organizations and in short term, limited funding projects with primarily white staff supervision. In comparison to yəhaw at King Street, which was a long-term project with a distinctly and intentional Indigenous polyvocal, community-based structure.

As a result, most of the organizations self-identified as being level 2-3 on the Continuum on becoming an Anti-Racist Arts and Cultural Organization, a passive Status Quo Organization and Symbolic Multicultural Organization.

There were frustrations with the response of colleagues, administration, board members and donors and inconsistent implementation of equity work within the organizations. These findings are consistent with Kenney (2021) who also observed the increased awareness and interest in equity work and that the biggest obstacles to equity work in arts and culture organizations were ones created internally, rather than externally.

In conclusion, using the 4 R's and the *Continuum on becoming an Anti-Racist Arts and Cultural Organization* the sites selected for this study can be

understood as predominantly grappling with transitioning from Passive Status Quo and Symbolic Multicultural Organizations to Inclusive Transformed Organizations. On a scale of 1-6 the organizations that participated in this study are mainly 2 and 3's. Each site varies with the specific 4 R's implemented but no site interviewed shared using any more than 2 of the 4 R's. The events of 2020 have helped to raise awareness and bring about organizational change, but organizations still must invest time, intentionality, and resources.

Implications

One recommendation for organizations to develop more inclusive and responsive organizations is to leverage community experts and invest more in partnerships with Native organizations and foundations. Through respecting Indigenous people's knowledge and trusting them with the governing of their own communities, organizations will be able to foster connection and relevance to Indigenous communities. This is to address the low capacity of organizations in understanding the needs of community members, support self-determination, and sovereignty. Through paid partnerships, the burden of equity work on individual staff members and temporary contractors could be lessened and a culture of reciprocity can develop. Another recommendation for King County is to invest more in Native, Black and Latinx founded organizations and individuals directly who have already established trust and processes rather than Eurocentric organizations. A final recommendation is for organizations to revisit organizational mission, values, and strategic plan to be in line with Equity and consistently expect all departments and staff members to stay in line with goals. Particularly upper administration and leadership staff should be in alignment with the mission, values, and strategic plan. Feeling responsibility for the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples within an organization (on all levels and not just the public facing) for the future growth of an organization as it relates to its communities should be integral to the fabric of an organization.

To better understand the situation of arts and culture organizations in King County this research would benefit from a sample size larger than 4. Over 100 organizations received funding from the 2021 grant, of which the contact information of the professionals who applied can be easily accessed through 4Culture. The contact individuals can often be grant writers who are not directly overseeing the usage of funds, but can usually refer staff members to contact for future studies. Furthermore, as previously discussed these issues of change in the arts and culture sector is one that moves beyond King County and even Washington State. While King County has one of the largest numbers of

Urban Natives in the United States, many other counties in other states have a strong Native presence and thriving arts and culture scene. There is a lot of potential to expand the understanding of whether and how arts and culture organizations in King County and beyond are implementing the 4 R's or any other Indigenous ways of knowing and practices in the wake of the events of 2020.

In addition, this research and the research questions could be expanded to further understand what exactly museum professionals and organizations have attempted to change in their organizations.

While there is room for growth, this study revealed that non-tribal arts and culture organizations even in an area with a strong Native community are struggling to connect and develop inclusive, responsive environments. The organizations interviewed, remain Eurocentric and are limited in implementing the 4 R's and other Indigenous ways of knowing and practices. The subjects interviewed revealed efforts to change museums, arts and culture organizations are generally short-term rather than long-term and grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing and practices. However, because of the events of 2020 in particular organizations are more aware and interested in structural change to develop responsive and inclusive organizations.

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Appendix A

Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Arts and Cultural Organization

| Racial & cultural differences seen as deficits | | Tolerant of racial and cultural differences | | Racial and cultural differences seen as assets | |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| 1. Exclusive Segregated Organization | 2. Passive Status Quo Organization | 3. Symbolic Multicultural Organization | 4. Evolving Anti-Racist Institution | 5. Structurally Changing Organization | 6. Inclusive Transformed Organization |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Intentionally and publicly excludes or segregates People of the Global Majority – PGM* Intentionally and publicly enforces the racist status quo throughout institution Institutionalization of racism includes formal policies and practices, teachings and decision-making on all levels Usually has similar intentional policies and practices toward other socially oppressed groups, such as women, people who are disabled, elderly and children, people who identify as queer, immigrants, etc. Upholds White Supremacy culture <p>* People of the Global Majority (PGM) is an emerging, collective and universally inclusive term encompassing people who are Black, Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islander, Latina/o/x, multi-racial, MENA (Middle East and North Africa), creating greater connection, solidarity and empowerment for the people who represent over 80% of the world's population. POC: Used mostly in the U.S., this acronym for People of Color is a term that includes people who are Black, Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islander, Latina/o/x, multi-racial, MENA (Middle East and North Africa). BIPOC: A more recent evolution of the term POC referring to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Primarily used in the U.S. to highlight the unique struggles and significant disparities that Black and Indigenous people have experienced in this country.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tolerant of a limited number of PGM with "proper" perspective and credentials May still secretly limit or exclude people of the global majority in contradiction to public policies Continues to intentionally maintain white power and privilege through its formal policies and practices, teachings and decision-making on all levels of institutional life Often declares, "We don't have a problem" or is fine with or isn't even aware of having an all-white or predominantly white organization No outreach is done at any level to diversify the organization or they are doing outreach for "everyone" and can't help it if only white people respond Programming is centered on white artists, Western European art-forms and white cultural values The inclusion of PGM artists is perceived as lowering the quality of the art PGM audiences aren't viewed as worth the effort either because they believe that the cost to reach them isn't worth the return or that they wouldn't "fit" or might make the regular patrons feel uncomfortable or even scare away the long-time supporters Fear that the inclusion of PGM art will result in a loss of support from their donors | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Has public statement committing to diversity, equity and inclusion but hasn't implemented changes embodying aspirations Carries out intentional inclusiveness efforts, recruiting "someone of color" on committees or staff Expanding view of diversity includes other socially oppressed groups, such as women, people who are disabled, elders, youth, LGBTQ+, immigrants, etc. Might see themselves as "color-blind" in hiring, programming, marketing Marketing materials and website include higher % people of color than exist in organization Primary strategy for reaching communities of color is offering discounted opportunities or scholarships Primary strategy for hiring is to include a statement about encouraging POC to apply Can't understand why PGM haven't responded to their efforts Possible White Savior complex- the organization feels like they're helping PGM by offering them opportunities PGM still perceived through a deficit-framework Sees itself as "non-racist" institution – "We're open to all people," but – "Not to those who make waves" Little or no contextual change in culture, policies and decision-making Is still relatively unaware of continuing patterns of privilege, paternalism and control White cultural norms are centered White fragility shows up when PGM or other oppressed folk share about their experience Generic, performative, check-box equity work rather than specific, action-oriented engagement | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Growing understanding of racism and other -isms as barriers Develops analysis of systemic racism and other oppressions Board/staff participate in on-going anti-racism training New consciousness of institutionalized white power/privilege Develops intentional identity as an "antiracist" institution Begins to develop accountability to racially oppressed communities Increasing commitment to dismantle racism and eliminate inherent white advantage, but – Institutional structures and culture that maintain white power and privilege still intact and relatively untouched Those in decision-making positions may still be predominantly white or hold onto white cultural values even if more of the artists and supporting staff include PGM or PGM leader is only allowed to be the face of the org Programming includes one or two annual "diversity" slots Double standards in how people of color and their artwork are viewed, marketed and included Extra burden might be placed on PGM artists/staff that aren't expected of White staff, even if un-intentional (expecting them to be cultural consultants, translate materials, represent entire communities, outreach to their communities) without additional compensation, budget or support PGM may be gaining more access to the organization but they still experience significant harm Organization functions on White cultural norms so PGM have to code switch to fit in or be perceived as "professional" enough PGM feel like they need to navigate the unpredictability of an organization striving to be "woke" but not actually there yet so when an invisible line is crossed it's usually the PGM who have to back track rather than the non-PGM willing to lean in | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Commits to process of intentional institutional restructuring, based on anti-racist analysis and identity Embracing a more collective culture Audits and restructures organizational culture to ensure full participation of PGM intersectionally & including their worldview, culture & working styles PGM are included in all levels of the organization from board to leadership to staff to artists Implements structures, policies and practices with participatory decision-making and other forms of power sharing at all levels of org Commits to dismantle racism in the wider community, and builds clear lines of accountability to all oppressed communities Reaches out to involve PGM communities for all programming, not just the racially specific ones Anti-racist multicultural diversity becomes an institutional asset Examines & disrupts anti-Blackness Works in solidarity with other PGM & oppressed communities Re-defines and rebuilds all relationships and activities in society, based on anti-racist values Seeks deeper awareness in contributing to a more racially equitable, intersectional and human-centered workplace Acceptance of honest and direct feedback while holding compassion and grace for each person Space, time & resources provided Caucus spaces based on identity/positionality as deemed by those with least perceived power PGM staff, board members, artists and supporters are valued for the expertise they share as full human beings and not just for their race Collaborates with & compensates PGM folk in an equitable way, centering their voices, leadership, ideas, and needs in the process Honors multi-dimensionality of PGM people | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Full participation and shared power with people across all races and social spectrums in creating, deciding and implementing its vision, mission, values, structure, constituency, policies and practices Those who have been most impacted by systemic oppression are centered and decide individually how they want to participate Transformational Relational Culture rather than Transactional Individualistic one Collective org structure Functions from an asset-based framework Instills a sense of joy, trust and gratitude among all Inspires growth and learning Adaptive and continually evolving A place of possibility Each person involved with the very diverse organization (board, staff, artists, supporters, collaborators, audience) has agency and feels welcomed, included, seen, heard and valued for the full spectrum of their humanity Everyone is able to show up authentically and work to their fullest potential Every person feels alive and transformed Shared sense of community, trust and mutual care within the organization and its broader community where everyone has each other's back & respect Multi-cultural Audiences see themselves reflected in the work, staff & artists, and feel humanized by the depiction Those being depicted in the artistic work are involved in its creation at a decision-making level Public feels collective ownership in the organization and is able to voice authentic feedback that is truly listened to and taken into consideration for future planning Creating allies with others in creating true liberation for all people |

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