

# **Art and Culture as an Urban Development Tool**

## A Diachronic Case Study

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### *Abstract*

Urban arts policies have been studied frequently by urban scholars but shifts in the respective usage of the arts have been neglected. Frequently, the discourse of the present on how the arts are employed for urban development prevails, tuning out – incorrectly – how this discourse has been shifted over the years. To fill this gap, the author interviewed local experts and compared their statements on the topic of arts and culture in Baltimore's urban development over a period of more than twenty years, in 1988, 2004, and 2010. How did artists and arts managers, urban planners and urban politicians view the arts as a tool for Baltimore's urban development during these years? The study uses a qualitative case study approach. As such it has involved an in-depth exploration of the strategic usages of arts and culture in urban contexts. It is a result of the study that the meaning of arts and culture as a factor for urban development has changed considerably between 1988 and 2010. Whereas this meaning was "elevating the masses by the arts" in 1988, it was "the arts as key for the creative city" in 2004, and "nurturing the creative edge of artists" in 2010.

### *Keywords*

urbanism; creativity studies; cultural policy; cultural sociology; cultural history

*'What you call "spirit of the ages"  
is after all the spirit of those sages  
in which the mirrored age itself reveals.'  
(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe,  
*Faust: The First Part of the Tragedy. Night.*)*

### **1. Theoretical Foundations**

Research in contemporary urban sociology shows that structural changes in the urban landscape are often linked to the socio-economic interests of urban elites (LOGAN/MOLOTH 2007; JONAS/WILSON 1999). This view of the crucial role of political and economic factors in urban development has been underpinned by geographers and philosophers such as HARVEY (1989), LEFEBVRE (1991), and CASTELLS (1978). The usages of arts and culture in this "new urban sociology" (GOTT-

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DIENER/HUTCHINSON/RYAN 2014) has been outlined by, among others, WHITT (1987), CURRID (2010), and STROM (2010). Arts and culture have become prominent factors in the planning of post-industrial and creative cities (PATTERSON/SILVER 2015; FLORIDA 2014; SCOTT 2014; LANDRY 2012; EVANS 2002; BIANCHINI/PARKINSON 1993). Post-industrial urban development depends on the role of the arts in the city (CLARK et al. 2014; ECKARDT/HASSENPLUG 2003; MARKUSEN/GADWA 2009).<sup>1</sup> Though arts and culture have been part of the politics of post-industrial urban development (cf. FAINSTEIN/CAMPBELL 1996), their role has varied over the last twenty years. This is not the place for an in-depth review of the different theories on the arts in urban development policies and politics since the end of the 1980s. However, the authors mentioned above provide a reasonable guide to the literature on the subject.

Differences of arts policies ‘in place’ have been studied by scholars of the field, but differences ‘in time’ have been often neglected. Frequently, there is only one dominant discourse<sup>2</sup> about how the arts should be employed for urban development in a place, tuning out other ways in other cities, countries, or continents. This dominant discourse is anchored in the present. Community leaders argue that their current understanding is the only right one and assume that it is valid for all time. However, the urgent issues of today might be as parochial and time-bound as the issues that were important twenty years ago seem to us today. In fact, the zeitgeist<sup>3</sup> might have a large impact on the usages of the arts for urban development. To question this topical hegemony is the purpose of this

<sup>1</sup> CLARK et al. (2014) compare Tocquevillian civic participation and Schumpeterian (Bohemian) innovation in urban developments in Korea, Japan, the United States, Canada, France, Portugal and Spain under the influence of artist urban scenes labelled as “buzz”. ECKHARDT/HASSENPLUG (2003) have edited a volume comparing the consumption of culture as post-industrial development in Scandinavian capitals, Polish and Bulgarian cities, Lisbon, Helsinki, Manchester, London, Moscow, Barcelona and Porto. MARKUSEN/GADWA (2009) give a comprehensive state-of-the-art survey about the arts and culture as an important urban development tool in different American cities.

<sup>2</sup> I am following the definition of ‘discourse’ Foucault uses in his *Archaeology of Knowledge* (2002) as an entity of narratives that appears to be undisputable, ‘natural’ and never-changing although in fact they are latently motivated by political concerns and infused with power. Discourse influences our understanding of concepts and worldviews although they are just a product of time-dependent power structures. Discourse in this sense is a hegemonic and coercive assignment of meaning (KELLER 2011).

<sup>3</sup> Georg Friedrich Hegel, in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, uses a similar formulation: “No man can surpass his own time, for the spirit of his time is also his own spirit.” For Hegel, art always reflects the culture of the time in which it is created (cf. Magee 2011).

article, and it does so by comparing discourses about “arts and the city” over time for one case study: the city of Baltimore, Maryland. Over a period of more than twenty years, in 1988, 2004, and 2010, the author conducted interviews and compared statements, value ascriptions, interpretations and policy interventions as discussed by local actors. How did artists and arts managers, urban planners and urban politicians view the arts as a tool for Baltimore’s urban development during these years?

## 2. Methodological Remarks

This study is based on an interpretive epistemological paradigm that assumes social reality is constructed and that the meanings of our world are relative and prone to change over time and place (MERTENS 2009). In contrast to a positivist and critical-rationalist methodology, this study is not looking for generalizable knowledge but for phronesis, that is, for exemplary knowledge that does not pretend to be universal but instead recognizes narrative diacronicities, time-dependent particularities and breaches of alleged canonicities (THOMAS/MYERS 2015: 43-52).

This study uses a qualitative case study approach, and as such involves an in-depth exploration of a particular process. The analytical framework, or object of the study, is the usages of arts and culture for urban development over a period of more than 20 years. The data source, or subject of the study, is the city of Baltimore and a fluctuating group of local experts and practitioners who relate their activities and understandings concerning the usages of arts and culture in an urban context. This is a diachronic case study over more than two decades. Over this period of time, different people and different institutions with different opinions and objectives were interviewed. The data was collected using semi-structured expert interviews (GLÄSER/LAUEL 2010; BOGNER et al. 2009; KAISER 2014) and analyzed by means of systematic content analysis using the CAQDAS software Atlas.ti (FRIESE 2014; LEWINS/SILVER 2007; ALEXA/ZÜLL 2005). The semi-structured interview had the following structure: first, the structure, progress and impacts of urban arts organizations; second, the effects of the arts on urban development; third, the effects of urban development on the arts; and, fourth, on the interrelationships between the arts and urban development and the consequences for cultural policy (see for example MARKUSEN 2006; MARKUSEN/JOHNSON 2006; MARKUSEN/GADWA 2009, 2010; STROM 2002, 2010).

Slight changes were made to the interview questions and sample from 1988 to 2004, and again from 2004 to 2010.<sup>4</sup> This was due to changes in the role of the arts as an urban development tool in 1988, 2004, and 2010. The sample of experts also varied over the period of the study because the experts themselves changed over time – as did the topics they expressed. Keeping the expert sample constant for all three years might seem necessary to ensure comparability of the results, but this consistency would have been artificial. Striving for generalizability would have violated the concept of phronesis. Instead, a theoretical sampling strategy was followed and experts were selected based on their knowledge of the arts in Baltimore (KELLE/KLUGE 2010: 47ff). The first part of the interview began with a question about the effects of urban development on arts institutions. The second part dealt with the reverse effects of arts institutions on urban development. The third part of the interview asked for statements about urban cultural policy, and the fourth part of the interview dealt with questions about organizational structures and changes. The interviewees expressed their professional opinions in their role as experts, not as private persons (GLÄSER/LAUDEL 2010). All interviews were transcribed (350 pages of single spaced text, Courier 11 pt.) for CAQDAS analysis.

Corresponding to the structure of the deployed questionnaire, the analysis is a kind of abductive research, i.e., a combination of theory-based assumptions, knowledgeable intuition and data measurement (THOMAS/MYERS 2015: 45f.; REICHERTZ 2007). The steps of analysis follow the rules of systematic content analysis, i.e. extraction, categorization and topic pattern identification (MAYRING 2010). The descriptive phase involved the process of the selection, definition and categorization of codes, or discourses. In this phase I looked for major recurring codes by counting their frequency (the ‘groundedness’ in grounded theory).

The following analytical phase involved, first, a search for co-occurring codes ('density') and, second, the analysis of the relation type between the co-occurring codes. The analysis was then visualized in (informal, non-mathematical) semantic networks that display the most important codes and their strongest relations to other important codes (SOWA 2006, 2014; van ATTEFELDT 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Each interview started with requests for information about the interviewee: their name, organization, position, main tasks, and length of employment. Questions were also asked about the organization: how long the organization has existed, its main goals, and the objectives and motivation for organizational change.

The data were provided by 39 one- to two-hour expert interviews. Following the rules of theoretical sampling (KELLE/KLUGE 2010; THOMAS/MYERS 2015) the proportion of the experts in the three professional groups “artists and art managers” in arts production, “arts policy-makers and administrators” as arts intermediaries, and “managers of urban development and planning agencies” in urban development changed slightly over the three time periods (see Table 1). In 1988 the largest group of experts was the arts intermediaries group (7 out of 16), while in 2004, it was the arts production group (9 out of 16), and in 2010 it was the urban developer group (5 out of 9). These changes in the sample are due to changes in the dominant discourse in the time periods 1988, 2004 and 2010.

Baltimore was chosen for the study because after a history as an important seaport and industrial city in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries it is now struggling with its postindustrial future. By the middle of the 1970s, the city experienced severe economic setbacks as many corporate headquarters moved out of the city into the affluent suburbs of Baltimore County and beyond or lost their status due to mergers with bigger corporations in other cities (HANSON/NORRIS 2006). Since the 1950s and 1960s massive suburbanization (LEVINE 1987, 2000), real estate speculation, race discrimination (PIETILA 2010), and an often ignorant and overburdened urban administration (ORR 2004) created a black population in the inner city that was predominantly poor, inadequately educated, socially deprived, discriminated against, and often unemployed. In 1950, 950,000 people lived within the city limits; now there is a population of only 620,000, and 67 percent of them are African-Americans. The reverse is true in the suburbs, with a population growing to 2 million (US Census 2010). Major challenges in the city of Baltimore are racial discrimination and social segregation, poverty and drug-related crime, reinforced by a strong shadow economy in drug dealing (ERICSON 2008). The main countermeasures have been urban renewal projects like the *Charles Center* in the 1970s, the Inner Harbor tourist development in the 1980s, and the “back-to-the city” reurbanization of the Eastern waterfront in Fells Point and Canton in the 1990s. Since the 2000s, urban development projects promoting arts and entertainment districts have become popular, demonstrating the growing significance of the arts in leading the city towards a better future as a “creative city” (PONZINI/ROSSI 2010). The city’s social, economic, and political conditions can be seen then as a powerful factor in the development of arts management, arts policy, and arts production in this city.

<b>1988 (total N=16)</b>	<b>2004 (total N=16 )</b>	<b>2010 (total N=9)</b>
<b>1. Managers and artists of arts institutions</b>		
(N=7)	(N=9)	(N=3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· MUSEUMS: Director of the <i>Walters Art Gallery</i>, Director of the <i>Baltimore Museum of Art</i></li> <li>· ART GALLERIES: Director of the <i>School 33 Art Center</i></li> <li>· THEATERS AND PERFORMING ARTS: Associate Managing Director of <i>Center Stage theater</i>, President of <i>Fells Point Corner Theater</i></li> <li>· CLASSICAL CONCERTS: Executive Director of the <i>Baltimore Symphony Orchestra</i></li> <li>· CINEMAS: Assistant General Manager and Regional Director of the <i>Loews Movie Theatre</i> chain</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· MUSEUMS: Director of the <i>Walters Art Museum</i>, Senior Director of Marketing at the <i>Maryland Science Center</i></li> <li>· ART GALLERIES: Exhibitions Coordinator at <i>School 33 Arts Center</i></li> <li>· THEATERS AND PERFORMING ARTS: Producing Director of Theatre Project, Co-founder and program director Creative Alliance at the <i>Patterson</i></li> <li>· CLASSICAL CONCERTS: Director of Artists and Special Programs and President of the <i>Baltimore Symphony Orchestra</i></li> <li>· CINEMAS: Owner of the <i>Senator Theatre</i> and the <i>Rotunda Cinematheque</i>, co-owner of the <i>Charles Theatre</i></li> </ul>		
<b>2. Arts policy makers and administrators (N=6)</b>		
(N=6)	(N=2)	(N=1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· CITY AND COUNTIES: Two Administrators for the Visual Arts at the <i>Mayor's Committee of Arts and Culture (MACAC)</i>, Administrator for the Performing Arts at MACAC, Executive Director of the <i>Baltimore County Commission on Arts and Sciences</i>, Executive Director of the <i>Howard County Arts Council</i></li> <li>· STATE and METRO AREA: Deputy Director of <i>Maryland State Arts Council</i>, Executive Director of <i>Baltimore Metropolitan Area Regional Planning Council</i></li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· CITY: Cultural Affairs Director of the <i>Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts</i>, formerly MACAC</li> <li>· METRO AREA: Director of the <i>Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance</i></li> </ul>		

<b>3. Managers of urban development agencies using the arts for their purposes</b>		
(N=3)	(N=5)	(N=5)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· URBAN DEVELOPMENT: Director of the public-private <i>Charles Street Management Corporation</i></li> <li>· EDUCATION: <i>Cultural Arts Coordinator of the Harford Community College Special Events Series</i></li> <li>· URBAN SOCIAL SERVICES: Project Director of the <i>Urban Services Agency – Cultural Arts Program</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· URBAN DEVELOPMENT: Marketing Director of the <i>Downtown Partnership of Baltimore</i>, formerly <i>Charles Street Management Corporation</i>, Director of Business Development, PR and Marketing of the <i>Baltimore Development Corporation</i> (BDC) and her assistant, Executive Director of <i>Mount Vernon Cultural District</i></li> <li>· LOCAL NEWSPAPER: Editor of the <i>Baltimore City Paper</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· URBAN DEVELOPMENT: Director of <i>Station North Arts and Entertainment District</i>, Director of <i>Southeast Community Corporation</i>, in Highlandtown, Director <i>Baltimore Jubilee</i>, President of the <i>Baltimore Development Corporation</i></li> <li>· EDUCATION: President of the <i>Maryland Institute College of Art</i></li> </ul>

Tab. 1: Roster for expert interviews in 1988, 2004 and 2010.

### 3. Descriptive Results

The description of the effects of arts and culture on Baltimore's urban structures and processes is based on an enumeration of the corresponding codes in the interviews of 1988, 2004, and 2010. Lists of the most important codes, or topics, are given in Table 2. The lists are the result of a repeat reading of the transcribed interviews and marking of substantial text passages ('quotations'), after which a code is assigned to each of these text passages. The lists display the top twenty-four codes for each of the three time periods by groundedness, or topic frequency, and by density, that is, the relatedness of codes to other codes.

Six codes were mentioned frequently in all three time periods: 'culture on the city', 'cultural policy', 'arts venues', 'organizational goals and changes', 'arts funding', and 'urban economy'. Another main code that appeared in each of the time periods is 'network'. However, the meaning of this term changed noticeably.

<b>1988 Frequent Codes</b>	<b>Ground- edness</b>	<b>Den- sity</b>	<b>2004 Frequent Codes</b>	<b>Ground- edness</b>	<b>Density</b>
<b>high art</b>	55	7	<i>culture on city</i>	88	16
<b>arts education</b>	48	5	<i>arts funding</i>	79	11
<b>high/popular art distinction</b>	47	4	<i>cultural policy</i>	78	9
<i>arts funding – public</i>	43	5	positive neighborhood changes	74	15
<i>culture on city</i>	40	8	organizational constituency	65	7
audience support   demand	33	3	city on culture	60	14
artist support	32	3	re-urbanization	57	9
<i>cultural policy</i>	30	5	<i>urban economy</i>	53	5
location of performing arts	29	0	urban image	50	9
arts survey   marketing	29	4	<b>mayor</b>	50	7
<i>arts venues</i> in city center	29	2	<i>networks</i>	49	5
arts venues in suburbia	24	2	<i>organizational goals   changes</i>	48	5
<i>organizational goals   changes</i>	23	0	socio-economic change	45	11
community involvement	23	3	creativity	43	6
<i>urban economy</i>	22	6	<i>arts venue</i>	40	4
popular culture	21	0	crime and grime	35	5
competition	20	2	attracting qual- ified residents	34	9
African-American community	20	2	suburbaniza- tion	33	5
arts funding – private	20	1	competition	31	4
inclusion   outreach	19	4	demographic change	28	6
metropolitan area	19	2	cooperation	26	5
distinction non-profit   commercial art	19	0	<b>Richard Florida</b>	24	5
geographical accessibility of arts venues	18	4	arts districts	23	10
“The Big Six” network	18	4	cultural flagships	22	2

<b>2010 Frequent Codes</b>	<b>Groundedness</b>	<b>Density</b>
<b>urban developers for the arts</b>	73	12
<b>artists live &amp; work</b>	64	11
Station North arts district	53	8
<i>urban economy</i>	53	6
<i>culture on city</i>	47	17
neighborhood image	43	9
<i>cultural policy</i>	41	13
artist housing	39	7
city & state policies	39	4
<i>networks</i>	38	8
Highlandtown arts district	36	5
<i>arts funding</i>	33	7
<i>arts venues</i>	26	4
tax policy	26	4
colleges	26	7
location policy	22	3
gentrification	19	4
<i>organizational goals   changes</i>	19	6
neighborhood qualities	16	4
city on culture	15	9
vacant buildings	15	4
creativity	13	5
ethnic diversity	13	3
crime and grime	13	3

Tab. 2: Baltimore 1988, 2004, 2010 – Code list ranked by groundedness and density (for 24 most frequently listed codes; Codes in bold fonts only appear in one time period, codes in regular fonts appear in two time periods, and codes in italic fonts appear in all three time periods).

In 1988 Baltimore's 'network' was very akin to the 'Big Six' and indicated the closed-door power elite of Baltimore's six biggest high arts institutions with their hegemonic power over artistic images and resources. In 2004 'network' meant the cooperative networking of many midsize and smaller local and regional arts institutions in a then new umbrella association, the *Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance*. This association

changed the power structure of Baltimore's art institutions by making smaller arts venues and artists important for the city. In 2010 the term 'network' took on once again another meaning. Now it referred to a network of non-profit civil society institutions supporting the many local artists in innovative and informal arts scenes. It meant an acknowledged source for the creative rejuvenation of local arts productions, and for a new policy promoting a creative city catalyzed by the arts.

Interestingly enough, some codes that were exceptionally important in one time period disappeared completely from the lists in the other time periods; these codes have been subjected to particularly close attention. In 1988 the three issues most often expressed in the interviews were 'high art', 'arts education', and the 'distinction between high and popular art'. None of these issues reappear in 2004 and 2010. In 2004 the codes 'mayor' and 'Richard Florida' are among the top issues but in 2010 they disappear from the list of top codes. The significance of 'private developers' for the advancement of urban arts quarters was not mentioned in 1988 but became the number one issue in 2010. Likewise, the concept of 'arts districts' was unknown in 1988 but in 2004 it was an important topic for the experts. In 2010 the importance of 'arts districts' was reflected in the high ranking of 'Station North Arts District', 'artist living and working', 'artist housin' and the significance of 'vacant building' –not as a predicament but as potential for artistic creativity.

Among the topics most often mentioned in 2010, but not in 1988 and 2004, were policy issues that were not part of the code 'cultural policy': for example, 'city and state', 'taxes', 'location' and 'zoning'. In 2010 the work of young emerging artists, 'artists live and work' which were not a topic in 1988 and 2004, became a staple of policy-making discussions.

The significance of major codes at one of the time periods and their disappearance in the other time periods led me to assign certain 'labels' to each of the discourses in the time periods 1988, 2004, and 2010. The 1980s still expressed an outspoken need to use the high arts for educational purposes and to mark and maintain social distinction by drawing a boundary between high and popular arts and so I called this period "elevating the masses by the arts". The emphasis in 2004 was on creativity and a policy of using soft economic factors such as the arts in urban development led to labelling this period as 'the arts as key for the creative city'. Around 2010, private developers and other arts supporters helped to create arts districts, artist housing and an urban policy supportive of young creative artists. This led to the caption 'nurturing the creative edge'.

#### 4. Analytical Results

This section will explore the network of relations among coinciding or co-occurring codes. In all 1988, 2004 and 2010's interviews, the experts related codes to other codes. These relations are either expressed as a strong causality (x causes y, y depends on x), as a slightly less powerful influence (x influences y), as an assigned subset (y is part of x), or as a less determined association (x is associated with y). Relations can be strengthening or weakening, they can be contradictory (x contradicts y), or they are contentious (x opposes y). To find out what relation codes have, the software program searches for co-occurrences, that is, codes that are frequently found together with other codes. Comparing the meaning of the texts around these co-occurrences determines the type of relation. The results of this relation analysis are then visualized in semantic networks (SOWA 2006, 2014). For clarity, the semantic networks are limited to the most frequent co-occurring codes. The first number in the curly brackets indicates the number of mentions ('groundedness'), and the second the number of relations to other codes ('density'). The most important codes are those with both numbers having high values.

##### **4.1 1988: 'Elevating the masses by the arts'**

The label assigned to the 1988 discourse on arts in urban development is 'elevating the masses by the arts', and is a reference to Matthew Arnold's (1993) famous 1869 essay about culture being the opposite of civilization. For Arnold, industrialized civilization is soulless, amoral, and characterized by a cold materialism. It can only be countered by the achievements of culture, which provide the masses with a moral and humanistic education. This is especially necessary for the working class, which would otherwise be tempted and misled by popular culture into disorder and anarchy (ROTHENBERG 2014: 30).

The co-occurrence analyses of the codes most frequently mentioned in the 1988 expert interviews reveal five major issues.

1. The major relation in the 1988 network (see Figure 1) is between 'high art' and 'arts education'. Both are frequently mentioned in the interviews, as can be seen by the numbers in the curly brackets behind the codes. Arts education is understood as a means to adjust mass taste to the norms of high culture, and, in this context, high art is considered a valuable part of arts education. The deputy director of

the *Baltimore County Arts Commission* exemplifies this understanding in her statement:

The efforts made by people like us, to educate and to bring up the standards of the so called common man, are valid efforts [...] I see that gap [towards the high arts] really closing... I would like to think it's because education has made the kind of progress that has made that possible, I'd like to think that the whole society is maturing, as all societies eventually do, into an appreciation of the high arts.

2. The executive director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra states this in a very similar manner:

The people in the community want this for their children, even if they don't want it for themselves. People feel that classical music is a valuable experience of good life... they don't want to see that their children deny this opportunity to expose to that.

In 1988 the arts in urban settings had a status-elevating task and were legitimized first and foremost by their educational usage. In these 1988 interviews, the purpose of arts education was assumed to be creating a greater appreciation of high art. Arts education is the forceful acceptance of conventions defined by the educated elite. A reverse adaptation of the high arts towards a popular culture of and for the people in the inner city (mostly African-Americans) was unthinkable. The president of Fells Point Corner Theater phrased this sentiment in the following way:

The more you enrich a child the more depth takes place... that's what theatre is all about... just a chance to see how marvelous you can stretch every single human being. I think that's what we are able to do here [...]. Some of the messages we do would be more easily understood if these people just come in the theatre... and recognize the conventions.

Only one of the 1988 experts rejected the standard phrase of 'education towards high art'. The associate managing director of the Baltimore theater Center Stage had a dissenting opinion:

We believe quite strongly that education does not dictate whether a person will enjoy theatre or not... There is a belief here that there are other barriers here than education. We are trying to make this theatre more accessible... We know there are people out there for whom it may be great to come even they are not college educated.

3. The second strongest relation in the 1988 semantic network is between 'high art' and 'high-popular art distinction'. Half of the experts interviewed defined 'high art' by elevating it over 'popular culture'. Symptomatic for this viewpoint were the statements by the repre-

sentative of the State Art Council, who described his funding policy for the arts by excluding everything ‘entertaining’ from his portfolio,

We do not fund ‘entertainment’, which are like rock concerts, that kind of thing... The closest we get to crossing the line... is in folk arts, where we fund ‘ethnic’ type organizations [...] We want to see people applying to us for high culture, where the arts are taken seriously. What we want to fund at the state level is the concert where people come to listen to serious music.

The attribute ‘serious’ is also at the center of the Walters Art Gallery director’s understanding of art reception as a laborious activity, “Our institution requires work: when you look at Raphael you have to work at it!” For the director of the School 33 art gallery, “avant-garde” and “difficult” are synonyms for her exhibitions, which are visited by “... people who go to avant-garde music performances, difficult theatre pieces, and avant-garde exhibitions.”

4. The third important relation in the 1988 semantic network is the positive impact of the high arts on the city, between ‘high art’ and ‘culture on city’. The representative of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra pointed out the effect his arts venue – the then new Meyerhoff Symphony Hall – had on the immediate Mt. Royal neighborhood:

There is clearly a direct impact on the neighborhood from having this house here... 10 years ago this neighborhood was a very bad neighborhood. Now this neighborhood is holding up ... the Meyerhoff Hall is a kind of anchor. It draws in people. You see right across the street... a restaurant... Just down the street at the same time as the Meyerhoff Hall the Theatre Project and a Jazz Club opened up.

All 1988 interviews evaluated the impact of the high arts on their neighborhoods as positive. The president of the Fells Point Corner Theatre defended gentrification as a necessary step for her neighborhood:

Fells Point is a very good example... These improvements here are good... It’s a naïve concept that somebody got to be displaced when somebody good comes along... People die; changes take place, these are organic changes... this is a free enterprise process, some people get left out, but that doesn’t mean they didn’t have a chance to get in there ... You say gentrification is going to diminish the life of the people who live here. Well, hey, let it go to deteriorate is far worse. Bringing in a theatre here is giving them much more hope.

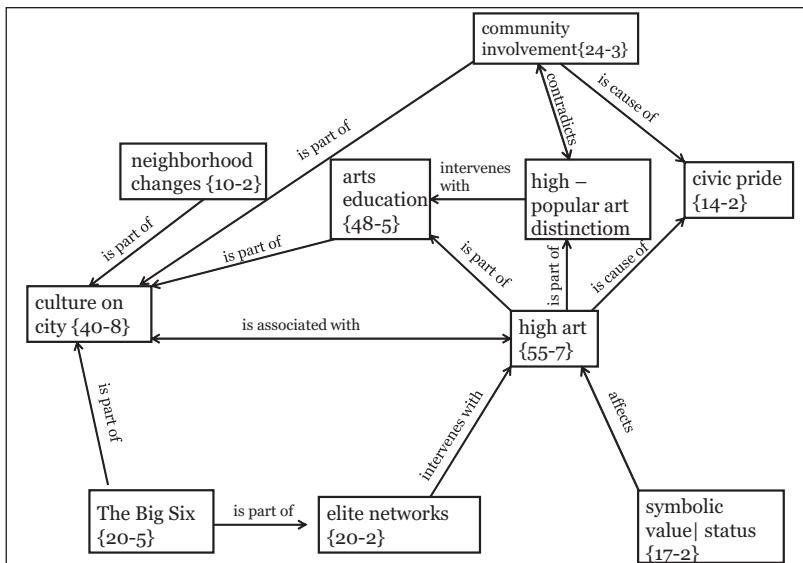


Fig. 1: 1988 semantic network showing art education and the distinction by art as significant issues for the impact of culture on urban development, Baltimore 1988 (Note: Numbers in {parentheses} are, first, the frequency of a code in the texts, and second, the number of relationships to other codes.).

5. Finally, in 1988, the powerful and exclusive influence of the mighty 'Big Six' institutions (i.e. the major local high art venues)<sup>5</sup> on the urban and cultural development of the city was mentioned more often than any other arts venue. The executive director of the *Regional Planning Council* pointed out:

In our work, it is probably necessary to neglect the small cultural institutions and emphasize on the 'Big Six'. We try to focus on those institutions which have a regional constituency, and that means necessarily a few large, historically long lived institutions in the 'high culture'.

He goes on to talk about the social function of the 'Big Six' for Baltimore's elite network:

High cultural institutions are initiated and supported by the social elite, a minority with some dollars. Every city with an elite has such a symbol for themselves.

He is defensive about his elitist standpoint:

5 In 1988 these were the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Baltimore Opera Company at the Lyric, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Walters Art Gallery, Center Stage, and Morris Mechanic Theatre.

Some people criticize us that there is more high culture than low culture here... There were statements that our visual arts shows were inaccessible... the art itself was inaccessible, they stood in front of it and they had no idea what was going on.

However he maintains the standpoint that the high arts are essential for the city's socio-political fabric.

#### **4.2 2004: The arts as key for a creative city**

The 2004 interviews provide a different view. In the 1990s the reurbanization of Baltimore's inner city areas was considered a change for the better, and according to the 2004 experts culture and the arts contributed heavily to this transformation.

The years from the turn of the millennium and the noughties produced an abundance of work about the importance of creativity on cities (HAWKINS 2001; FLORIDA 2002; EVANS 2002). In these years, creativity became an enigmatic but imprecise term used by local and regional politicians and economic development agencies to justify their search for postindustrial futures for their cities. Making use of studies in economic geography, urban planning, urban policy and urban sociology, they attempted to lure an urban elite of highly qualified white-collar employees into their "cities of success" by offering them not only interesting and well-paid jobs but an environment that catered to their pseudo-Bohemian lifestyles. Companies, municipalities, and marketing agencies used these concepts of a creative lifestyle to promote their location as providing a 'creative climate' for 'creative industries' in a 'creative city'. The arts play a pivotal role in shaping these lifestyle environments for the creative class. Much of the support for museums, theaters, philharmonic halls and national high arts festivals was intended to serve these imagineering strategies (KIRCHBERG 2010; STEETS 2011)

In the Baltimore of these years, inner-city re-vitalization and re-urbanization were accordingly directly linked to new cultural attractions, especially along the North Charles Street Corridor (see Figure 2). These attractions also reflected socio-demographic changes as these refurbished areas filled up with younger, more affluent, and – although not mentioned – racially less diverse (mostly white) people, that is, the 'creative class'. Gentrification became a reality in these areas.

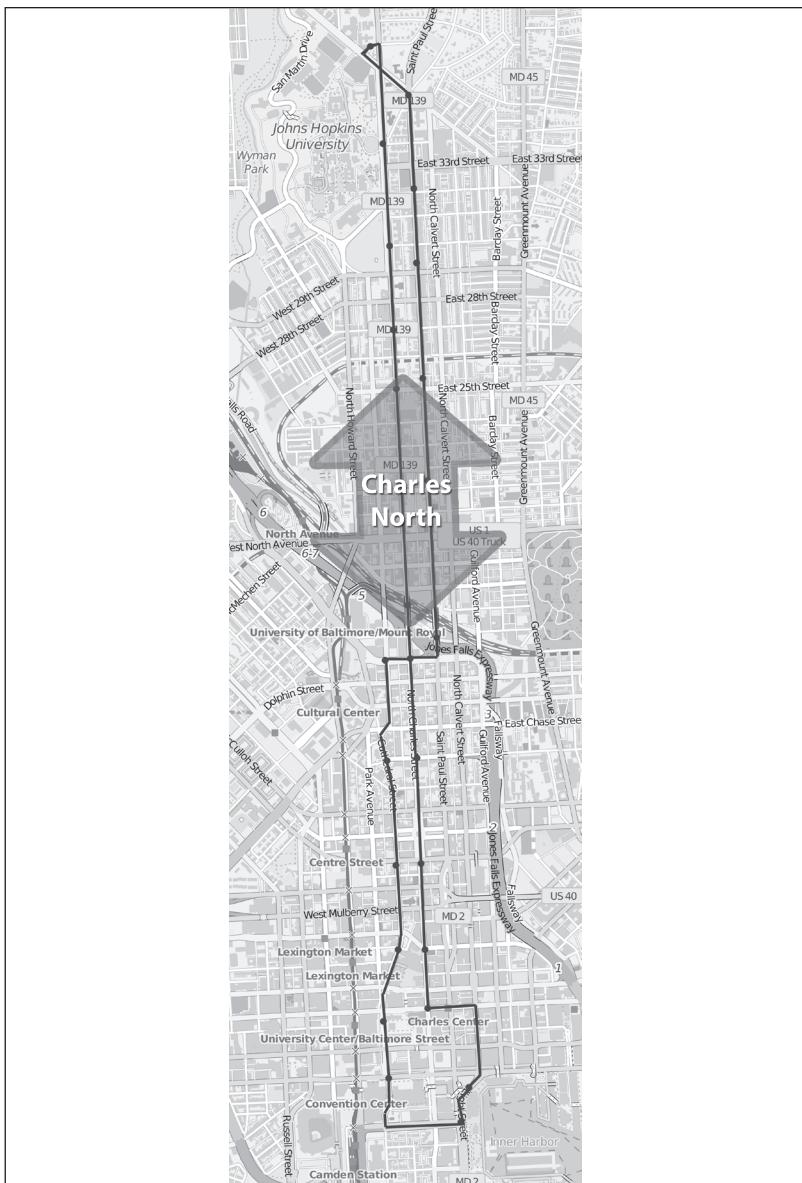


Fig. 2: *North Charles Street Corridor* (BTA+ 2008: 7).

The co-occurrence analyses of the codes most frequently mentioned in the 2004 interviews and their visualization in a semantic network (see Figure 3) reveal five major issues.

Young professionals are buying up property and moving into the area along the East Side and the central core city down the Charles Street corridor, buying up building after building, and rehab them (Owner of the Senator Theatre).

1. "...we have a real pocket of people now, with money up and down the Charles Street corridor" (Executive Director, Mount Vernon Cultural District). The location of arts institutions along this corridor improved safety and rendered this area more attractive,

...using the theory that people on the street help making the street safer, encouraging sidewalk restaurants, street musicians, and street performers on the street. ... The Charles Theater and the Everyman Theater are at the very edge of the [Mount Vernon] district. ... They are really instrumental in bringing that community back together again (Cultural Affairs Director, Baltimore Office of *Promotion and the Arts*).

2. Apart from this urban revitalization area between the Johns Hopkins University Homewood Campus and the Inner Harbor, for many interviewed arts managers, especially of the major arts venues, the direct economic impact of the arts on Baltimore's economy was still the one and only factor that counted.

Any city with a first rate symphony orchestra, it helps the own businesses to attract valuable employees... We have a very large payroll, and we pay city, state and federal taxes. A large portion of the money that is given in salaries is being spent in this city... Our players teach at Peabody and University of Maryland, and many other places. We have this caliber that has a huge effect on the city (Director of Artists and Special Programs, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra).

We are a 10-million-dollar-a-year operation and, thus, we also contribute to the community as an economic engine ... We increased the number of people working here... Baltimore is a city of non-profits and we are a huge part of that... I think it is a symbiotic relationship; people like us are making investments and thus improving those neighborhoods (Senior Director of Marketing, *Maryland Science Center*).

### Counting on this impact, the city supported arts institutions.

So the city wanted to address that...and they also had a building [here in South Baltimore] in which they wanted to encourage new growth and they didn't want the building to be empty or to be torn down. They wanted to have something that was positive (Exhibitions Coordinator, *School 33 Arts Center*).

3. The next urban development objective was to promote the image of a successful postindustrial and artsy city, because the city believed that this would enable them to attract the "creative class". In 1999 the inauguration of a young and energetic mayor, Martin O'Malley (reelected 2004) pushed this agenda to the forefront because he closely followed Richard Florida's creativity mantra and understood his focus on the "creative class" as a silver bullet for making his city into a

successful postindustrial hub. In 2004 O’Malley started the *Creative Baltimore Initiative* in an attempt to cooperate with local artists on equal terms. It was a radical step for a Baltimore mayor to acknowledge the political significance of local artists, and he acknowledged their significance with a draft version of a white paper that was discussed in town meetings with artists and arts managers, before getting a final version signed by 79 local cultural actors to assure there was a common ground (PONZINI/ROSSI 2010). Without being prompted, a majority of the interview partners mentioned Richard Florida’s positive influence on the mayor and his cultural policy.

So, that [mayor] started looking at what San Francisco got what Baltimore doesn’t have. It is a hugely creative city! He started looking around and reading from this most informative book, the *Rise of the Creative Class*, Richard Florida had a huge influence on him, clearly (Program Director, *Theatre Project*).

Florida was a sort of a revelation, to hear someone apply a different viewpoint in terms of his statistical approach and just a general sort of revelation that a city that has experienced a degradation of many urban areas realized that if you want to change an area you first send in the artists and the rest follows” (Owner of the Senator Theatre). “[Florida] has spoken to many people who have moved to a particular area because of the arts and culture that was available in that area. This is the message that the city government is finally getting! O’Malley finally gets the message! (Cultural Affairs Director, *Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts*).

4. Close to Florida’s and the mayor’s considerations about cultural policy in Baltimore were issues of arts funding in 2004. All of the interview partners were skeptical about finding more city and state monies. However, that did not diminish the over-all positive impression many had of the mayor and his cultural policy. In this local discourse, symbolic support supplants material support:

Prior to [Florida] there was never even recognition of the fact that arts and entertainment could be anything else but a drain on the city coffers... I think it is beginning to change... (Executive Director, *Mount Vernon Cultural District*).

Most of the local arts scene jumped on the new policy bandwagon and supported the mayor’s ideas:

“...artists know that the city has a hard time. We want to be a part of the solution. We don’t want to be a part of the problem. ...we love creating a lot of stuff with very little money” (Program Director, *Theatre Project*).

5. However, already in 2004 a small group of the experts interviewed in this study did not agree with the overall positive opinion about the urban effect of the arts.

"I mean I think we do have a little bit mixed feelings. I guess our challenge will be to take that wealth that has moved into the neighborhood and see if we can access it for those that don't have as much. [...] When we first moved here we were surrounded by refugees. But as the real estate has gotten more and more expensive, they've been moving further and further north. So, probably, hopefully what will happen is we will just roll with that and do some work with schools to the north and still do our programs and still kind of figure stuff out" (Program Director, *Creative Alliance*).

Many of the artists and arts managers were critical about catering to a better qualified 'creative class' and wished to use the arts as a tool to build a stronger local identity for the original resident population and create an image of Baltimore as a city of neighborhoods. Symbols of the smaller neighborhood arts were employed to fight the symbolic power and instrumentalization of the major arts facilities for a 'creative class'. In 2004 promoting the image of the city moved to the forefront of urban policies. However, this "imagineering" was not without opposition from the local cultural scene. The Creative Alliance arts facility in Highlandtown was probably one of the most important players using the arts to positively develop local communities.

The reason I use the word symbol is because ... the physical presence of all these people coming in and out of this [Creative Alliance] creates a positive energy flow of people and activity and image that they understand and relate to. And they know it's a good thing. So if they just stand under the marquee [of the Creative Alliance] ... and show it to their friends and say 'Hey, that's going on in my neighborhood, look at that marquee!' (Program Director, *Creative Alliance*).

In 2004 the impact of the urban arts on the city can be thus categorized into four groups: neighborhood changes (more good than bad), urban image improvements (more for residents than for tourists or external businesses), urban economic development (the arts as soft location factor) and, related to the third category, cultural policy. This fourth category was not dominated by tangible factors like the on-going fiscal deficit, but by Mayor O'Malley's belief in Richard Florida's thesis that small grass-roots creative and cultural initiatives – instead of large cultural flagship projects – play a key role in the development of an economically sound creative city. The mayor received a lot of support from all levels for his interest in implementing cultural strategies in urban development.

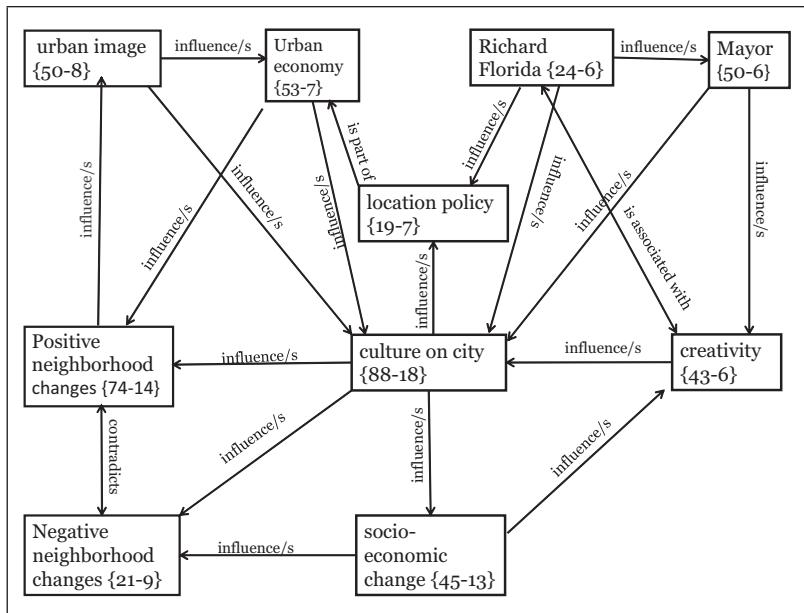


Fig. 3: 2004 semantic network showing creativity, neighborhood changes, urban image, and urban economy as significant issues for the impact of culture on urban development, Baltimore 2004 (Note: Numbers in {parentheses} are, first, the frequency of a code in the texts, and second, the number of relationships to other codes.).

#### 4.3 2010: “Nurturing the creative edge”

In 2010 the angle on arts and culture for urban development was, once again, a different one. The focus was now clearly on artists in arts *districts* and their effect on the city. A new agenda distanced itself from the economic impact of cultural policy, as investigated by Richard Florida, and drew instead from recent literature on young emerging artists as pillars of an urban and communal life. Early proponents of this new view on arts production and urban development include Charles Landry (1995, 2006), who emphasizes the intrinsic potential of a home-grown creative population in fostering a sustainable “creative city”; Bastian Lange (2007, 2008), who looks at networks of young “culturepreneurs” being targeted by Berlin’s development policies and place marketing; and Richard Lloyd (2010), who links the socio-economic success of a Chicago neighborhood, Wicker Park, to the long-term concentration of young artists precariously working and living there. Especially, the University of Minnesota team around Ann Markusen demonstrates that the primary value of local artists and their local networks is not found

in the economic sector but in creating a communal environment that makes an important contribution to an inclusive civil society. The essential condition is the provision of artists – young artists – with suitable and inexpensive housing, studios and workspace, residencies, grants, mentorships, as well as exhibition and performing space (MARKUSEN/JOHNSON 2006). Cultural districts in this sense are not areas anchored by large performing and visual arts venues but minimally planned areas of low-key buildings with nonprofit, commercial and cultural venues serving the local community (MARKUSEN/GADWA 2009). These artists – and their physically and mentally nurturing environments – are then placemakers for cultural enterprises that can foster economic development, provided that there is regulation enforcing sustainability and community engagement and preventing gentrification and displacement (MARKUSEN/GADWA 2010). In contrast to Florida, Markusen does not limit her view to the economic winners of a global competition for a “creative class” but stresses the other values that artists create, especially in second-tier cities like Minneapolis-St. Paul or Seattle, and – I would add – Baltimore.

In 2010 this new view dominates the discussion; it involves a much closer study of the actual impact culture has on the city than was once the case. The political and economic theses on the creative city (in 2004), or the moral obligations of the arts (in 1988) move to the sidelines, although Florida’s outlooks, never completely disappeared. Now, Baltimore’s poster child of a culturally driven urban development is the Station North Arts and Entertainment District. To learn more about this arts district, I chose experts with an intimate knowledge of the area. It is located on the northern edge of the central city – just north of the main railroad station – and it encompasses about 100 acres. In 2002 it received state designation as an arts and entertainment district to initiate urban development. Support varies from different types of tax breaks (property tax breaks for renovations, income tax credits for art sales, amusement-tax waivers) to a property tax assessment freeze and low-interest loans for building or renovating working and living space for artists.

Whereas the 2004 discourse involved hefty political campaign pledges focused on providing direct support, mostly economic incentives, for the creative industries and major arts venues, the 2010 discourse switched to small-scale pragmatism. Now, policy measures targeted at small-scale inner-city areas were successful by encouraging artists to live

and work in abandoned warehouses that years ago, under the radar of municipal monitoring, might have been occupied by squatters.

Besides the main code ‘culture on city’, the other central code of the 2010 semantic network was ‘Station North’, integrating (a) the living and working conditions of artists, (b) the provision of old industrial warehouses as living and working spaces, (c) the positive impact of house owners and project developers, and (d) the impact that the arts district had on a new understanding and appreciation of the arts among the political, intellectual, and economic urban elite and leadership.

Station North is positioned in the middle of the North Charles Street corridor between the Inner Harbor to the south and the Johns Hopkins University Homewood Campus to the north (see Figure 4).

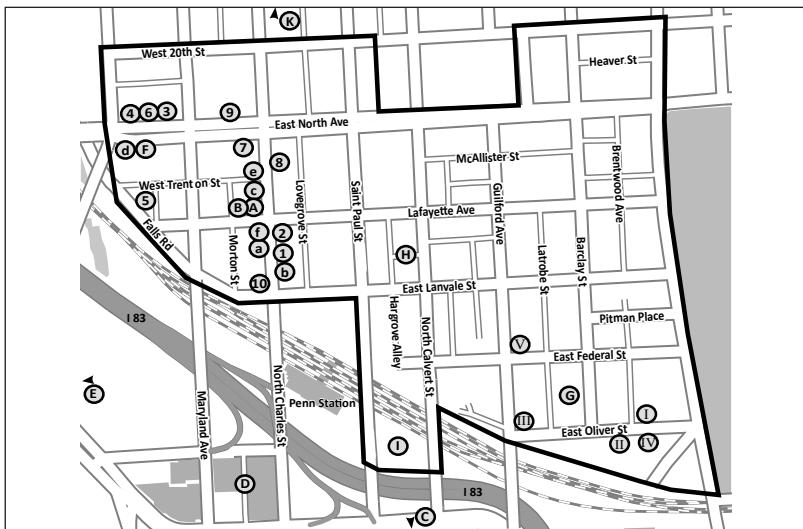


Fig. 4: *Station North with arts venues, restaurants, artist living/working places, urban development projects, and art colleges/schools, Baltimore 2010* (© Open Map Contributors).

<b>Theaters and Performance Venues</b> 1 Charles Theatre (Art Movie Theatre) 2 Everyman Theatre (Drama Theatre) 3 Single Carrot Theatre 4 Strand Theater 5 Lumberhaus Dance Studio 6 Load of Fun Theater 7 Parkway Theater (empty, still to be developed) 8 Centre Theater (empty, to be developed)	<b>Artist Living and Working Studios</b> I City Arts Apartments and Gallery (< <a href="http://www.livecityarts.com/">http://www.livecityarts.com/</a> >) II Area 405/Oliver Street Building (< <a href="http://www.area405.com/index.htm">http://www.area405.com/index.htm</a> >) III Copy Cat Building (< <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copycat_Building">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copycat_Building</a> >) IV Copy Cat Annex (< <a href="http://wikimapia.org/15825457/Copycat-Annex">http://wikimapia.org/15825457/Copycat-Annex</a> >) V Cork Factory (< <a href="http://www.urbanitebaltimore.com/baltimore/ationEvents?oid=1309728&amp;type=past">http://www.urbanitebaltimore.com/baltimore/ationEvents?oid=1309728&amp;type=past</a> >) VI Baltimore Print Studios (< <a href="http://baltimoreprintstudios.com/">http://baltimoreprintstudios.com/</a> >) VII The Hour Haus (practice space and recording studio, < <a href="http://www.thehourhaus.com/">http://www.thehourhaus.com/</a> >)
<b>Galleries &amp; Exhibition Spaces</b> 9 Windup Space Bar & Arts Venue 10 Metro Gallery 6 Load of Fun Gallery	<b>Urban Development Projects, Planning and Administrative Offices</b> A Station North Arts and Entertainment District Inc. (< <a href="http://www.stationnorth.org/">http://www.stationnorth.org/</a> >) B Central Baltimore Partnership (< <a href="http://www.centralbaltimore.org">http://www.centralbaltimore.org</a> >) C Jubilee Baltimore Inc. (< <a href="http://www.jubileebaltimore.org">http://www.jubileebaltimore.org</a> >) H Station North Mews I Parcel Post Station Building
<b>Restaurants, Cafés, Bars</b> a Club Charles b Tapas Teatro c Out Takes Café d Joe Squared e Station North Arts Gallery Café f The Depot g Bohemian Coffee House h Liam Flynn's Ale House I The Lost City Diner	<b>Art Related Colleges, New Art Schools</b> D University of Baltimore (< <a href="http://www.ubalt.edu/index.cfm">http://www.ubalt.edu/index.cfm</a> >) E MICA Main Building (< <a href="http://www.mica.edu/">http://www.mica.edu/</a> >) F MICA Studio Center in Station North G Baltimore Design School (< <a href="http://baltimoreredesignschool.com/">http://baltimoreredesignschool.com/</a> >) (empty in 2010, formerly Lebow Clothing Factory, see also < <a href="http://www.zigershead.com/projects">http://www.zigershead.com/projects</a> >) K Johns Hopkins University Homewood Campus (< <a href="http://www.jhu.edu">http://www.jhu.edu</a> >) L Schuler School of Fine Art (< <a href="http://www.schulerschool.com">http://www.schulerschool.com</a> >)

Tab.3: Legend of map (fig. 4) of Station North.

The co-occurrence analyses of the most frequent codes in the 2010 interviews – and the subsequent visualization in a semantic network (see Figure 5) – yield five major issues on the significance of artists and the

'Station North Arts and Entertainment District' for Baltimore's urban development.

1. For both the city and the artists, the main assets of Station North were the big abandoned old industrial warehouses and factory buildings. Some of them had been empty for decades, some of them were informally occupied by artists for more than 25 years, some were still waiting for an artistic or any other use, and some buildings were newly built or were planned for non-profit artist residences and studios, fabricating authenticity as 'warehouse style'.

These areas are mainly driven by the desire of people in arts and culture to be near a train station, they like old buildings, loft buildings.... These are beautiful buildings, not in a great state, but in terms of artists enjoying that kind of building, north light, fairly cheap space, we have lots of those. So that's a good omen for the future. And I think we've got the critical mass now (President, *Baltimore Development Corporation*).

2. The change of this neighborhood's image from blight to sparkle was a direct result of the many young artists living there.

One of the remarkable and very positive changes is the discovery of Baltimore by artists and people in the theater as 'a cool place to be.' ... Somebody started it, and then they called their friends and said 'we like this place'. So ... there are these new little groups, particularly near the train station – Charles Street, North Avenue – ... not as part of a grand plan by the city or anyone else (President, *Baltimore Development Corporation*).

The Station North area is clearly split into an arts production and an arts consumption side. The consumption side, characterized by restaurants, cafés, and galleries, is the western part of the area. It caters to a crowd from mostly outside the district and projects an 'artsy' image of the district.

Suffice to say that Charles Village is now the Baltimore city neighborhood that has something that feels like real urban street life... it's starting to feel like maybe Amsterdam Avenue on the Upper West Side in New York... Non-artists were willing to come in and started businesses, restaurants with an artistic bend. So, a restaurant right here around the corner has live music for free every night and they also have art exhibitions on their wall that change every month. Some other gallery spaces have liqueur licenses, so there are really bars but they have art exhibitions on the wall and they have performers at night who do poetry readings or such things... It's really been the young entrepreneurs ... who are willing to take the risk... If you look at a tipping point within the last eighteen months period, I would say, probably in 2007 and 2008, what's started happening then is gallery spaces opened up here (Director, Jubilee Baltimore).

The artists and other creative workers living and working here in 2010 had none of the expressive qualities necessary for work on the

consumption side. Their subcultural and Bohemian arts production is not and does not want to be “consumer-friendly”. Relatively peripheral from the central Charles Street arts consumption axis and at the southeastern corner of the district bordering the train tracks and an old cemetery, there is a cluster of old industrial warehouses that is now the core of the Station North arts production.

The fact that people started to think of this area as an art and entertainment district, the fact that... there was value in promoting... this area, to create a sense of this place, that there are things going on here where the artists are living ... The key players from my perspective are the artists... who make what's happening in the district so unique. They have interesting... art work and gallery spaces and working spaces (Director, *Station North*).

The two sides of the district were emphasized by the artists living there.

When we originally formed the arts district, we identified two parts of it: One was the public face, which was supposed to be where all the galleries, the consumption was, and then we had this here, the residential area or the production zone, more about living and working space (Artist and Owner, *Area 405 Studio Building*).

3. The city tolerated these mostly informal arts production sites in Station North, in part because it expects real estate values to increase in the foreseeable future. The support given to artists, who functioned as pioneers, could thus be seen as an investment that might be followed by lucrative returns in the coming years.

[The city] saw the arts as being able to usher in troops of gentrification, the pioneers to come in, and so they took advantage of that. That is probably the reason why we've gotten this much support for the back end of things (Artist and Owner, *Area 405 Studio Building*).

4. Project developers had a pivotal role, not as top-down influencers and deciders but as cultural intermediaries, in securing Station North for artists. Financing and managing these projects and issues are difficult in a poor city such as Baltimore. Different to economically saturated and thus highly competitive cities like New York or London, developers in Baltimore cannot be the ‘evil force’ of immediate profiteering, at least not for the foreseeable future. An example for this is an artist-supporting urban developer, who instigated this district development with an elaborate network of like-minded citizens and local artists, and who, in 2010, realized his idea of a new low-income artist residence in the southeastern corner of the district.

And [the developer] and I sat down several times with other artists... We went in one night to the space, he shows up in his trench coat and his briefcase and a suit,

and we go into this artist's loft... into the living room which had a whole bunch of couches and a coffee table covered in pizza boxes that were empty, and the couch we were on was leaning down, it smelled like cat pee, and we sat there and talked and... he basically started this process of saying 'Okay, I'm interested in building a workspace for these people'. (Artist and Owner, *Area 405*)

I feel very positive about [the developers]... it shows that they are interested in supporting the artists. Four or five years ago they sent out a huge survey to all of the artists in the city asking 'What is it you want in this space? What do artists need? How much can they afford? What kind of spaces are they looking for? What opportunities do they need?' and I was one of the people who filled it out ... and then one day all of a sudden, there's a building over here. I think it's really exciting because there's going to be affordable spaces for artists (Artist and studio tenant).

5. The main factor, however, contributing to the success of Station North is the intense cooperation of Baltimore's major civil society institutions. This network consists mostly of local higher education institutions, with the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), at the western border of the Station North district, playing a pivotal role in pushing forward with an artist-oriented urban development. The college supplies the area with a continuous flow of artists, students and graduates that appreciate the environment of old warehouses. A loft lifestyle also suits their career plans.

We can talk about the school [MICA] with numbers; they are many young kids, they're making it all exciting. In the past, art was considered institutional art. The culture of the city and its cultural value as a city was through the arts institutions. There were a lot of establishment people that were nervous about the change, and wonder 'are these just a bunch of hippies coming back 40 years later in different clothing?' Now, you really see it as a balance between the artists and the institutions. ...but the vitality of the community is coming much more ...from the artists (President, *Maryland Institute College of Art*).

This civil society network is organized in the Central Baltimore Partnership,

... this group is committed to keep Station North an arts center district ... as a place for artists, so we work hard to make sure that if we're doing things we don't get in the way of the artists ... we have kind of an appeal to young people and artists. We have played, I would say, a catalytic role in those things but with very little direct intervention. I think we're more removing obstacles from their development than providing direct incentives for them to develop. (President, *Maryland Institute College of Art*)

There is an evident mistrust on the part of this network of civil society institutions towards state and market interventions.

Here we don't have the leadership in the city that would do it, and I'm not sure the city would be trusted to do it. We can do it in partnership with them, but nobody's

gonna trust them to do it by themselves. And certainly there's no corporate leadership today (President, *Maryland Institute College of Art*).

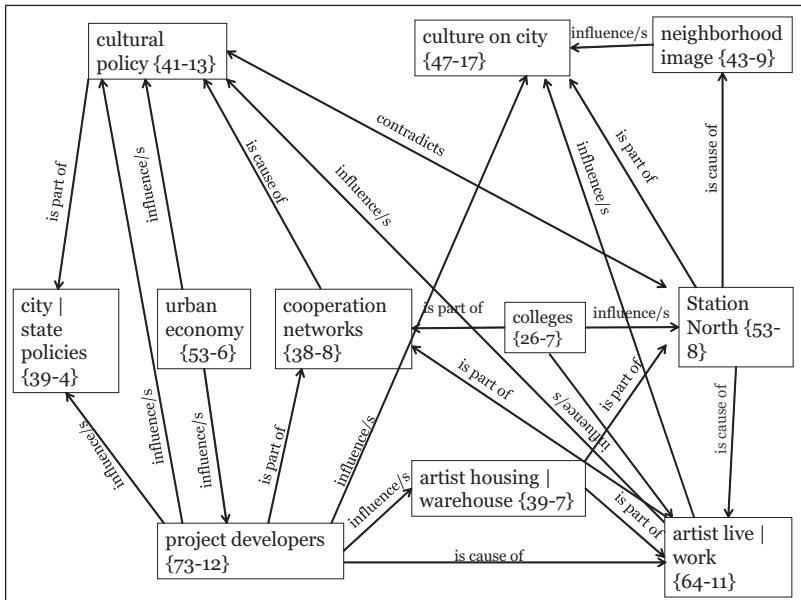


Fig. 5: 2010 semantic network of Station North Arts and Entertainment District, urban developers and cultural policy as significant issues for the impact of culture on urban development, Baltimore 2010 (Note: Numbers in {parentheses} are, first, the frequency of a code in the texts, and second, the number of relationships to other codes).

## 5. Conclusion: The spirit of ages is the spirit of sages<sup>6</sup>

Over the three time periods in this study, the answers the experts gave to the questions were very different. In 1988 the discourse was dominated by the importance of the high arts for educational purposes. In 2004 this issue vanished completely and was replaced by an economic discourse about creativity as fundamental for the development of a post-industrial city. In 2010 the main issue changed again, and now a project development and the support of young emerging artists in one district were paramount. The zeitgeist, or “spirit of the ages”, shifted considerably over these decades, and – Goethe was right – these changes depended

6 See the epigraph from Goethe's Faust this article begins with. A better translation, but non-rhyming, would be “spirit of those masters”.

on the “spirit of those sages”. These “sages” were embodied at different times in different local elite networks. In 1988 Baltimore’s art network was synonymous to the ‘Big Six’, or the major high arts institutions that then were able to – unchallenged – distribute state and city subsidies among themselves. In 2004 ‘art network’ took on a different meaning, as it was a cooperative confraternity of many midsize and smaller local and regional arts institutions under a growing umbrella organization, the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, which in collaboration with a culture-conscious mayor was able to break the power of the old elite art network. In 2010 the meaning of ‘art network’ changed again. Being confronted with the political apparatus neglecting culture and ever fewer public subsidies, it now became an interest-group of non-profit civil society institutions supporting local arts and artists in creating and sustaining innovative and informal arts scenes and milieus, especially around the Station North Arts and Entertainment District. In 2010 this new emphasis on artists and their works – and not on the major arts institution with their emphasis on consumption – was a radical shift from the significance the ‘Big Six’ had in 1988 and a rejection of the straightforward economic perspective of the ‘creative industries’ in 2004.

The changing significance and meaning of arts and culture as a factor for urban development over more than twenty years can be described as “elevating the masses by the arts” for 1988, “the arts as key for the creative city” for 2004, and “nurturing the creative edge” for 2010. A theoretical text can also be assigned to each time period: Matthew Arnold’s 1896 essay on *Culture and Anarchy* for 1988, Richard Florida’s 2002 book on the *Creative Class* for 2004, and Ann Markusen’s 2010 paper on *Creative Placemaking* for 2010.

In the 1980s arts and culture as a tool for urban development was only discussed by a few urban scholars (for an overview cf. KIRCHBERG 1992: 11-33). However, in the 1990s, with the emergence of economic incidence analysis and especially with the search for ways to reinvent the postindustrial city, major urban arts attractions received the dubious role of becoming a last-way-out panacea for urban turnarounds. The 2000s showed this strategy was only successful in those cities that were winners in other respects as well. Urban developers’ expectations of what the arts could accomplish fell to the more realistic level of promoting small-scale artistic creativity to help small-scale urban areas. This new approach seems to work under certain circumstances: when there is not much economic competition, a steady influx of artistic and creative people, and benevolent and supporting urban politics and policies. Bal-

timore illustrates the last element. In 1988 under Mayor William Donald Schaefer (1971-1987) and then Kurt Schmoke (1987-1999), the attention given to the arts and creativity as an urban tool was minimal to non-existent. This changed at the turn of the millennium with the election of Martin O’Malley (1999-2007) when he – at least with the little leeway he had – put arts and culture on his political agenda and brought together the different interest groups. His successors, Sheila Dixon (2007-2010) and Stephanie Rawlings-Blake (2010-2016), followed his lead but did not stand out as politicians that were particularly interested in arts and culture. As a consequence, civil society networks, made up of local universities and non-profit foundations, took over the task to define and implement an own urban cultural policy (cf. WOODS 2013) without involving or even consulting the city administration.<sup>7</sup> Their new emphasis on artists and their work reverses the previous focus on the “Big Six” in 1988 and on the economic understanding of the “creative industries” in 2004.

#### **Notes on contributor**

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<sup>7</sup> In countries like Germany it would not be possible to exclude public institutions from such urban development initiatives. In a future publication I will reintroduce the dimension of place in a comparative study of how arts and culture are instrumentalized – whether as a result of deliberate planning or inadvertently – for urban development in the cities of Baltimore and Hamburg for the time periods 2006 and 2013.

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