



International producer residencies

Discussion paper #2, 9 Dec 2013

Introduction

I'm interested in developing new creative relationships between Australia and Europe, through a series of reciprocal producer residencies. (Why? Read a summary of the first discussion paper or the whole thing, [here](#).)

I presented that paper at IETM Athens in October, and was swamped with interest from more than 35 organisations across Europe and Australia. Thanks to everyone I talked with for those great conversations.

In response to those, and in talking further with some colleagues, I've developed the idea further in the paper that follows, and have mapped out a possible structure for a system of residencies, a network of organisations connected through a shared exchange via their producers.

I'm now seeking feedback and input from those interested in the idea, to develop it further to the point of seeing funding, possibly as early as February - March 2014 (Australia Council for the Arts, and Creative Europe).

If you'd like to contribute, here's what to do.

1. Read the new Discussion Paper #2 (hot off the presses, published Dec 9). Download it [here](#).
2. Comment in the forum below at www.intimatespectacle.com.au/residencies
3. Answer a short questionnaire (5-10 minutes I promise!) [Click here to take survey](#).

What is it for?

- To build understanding, and enduring and meaningful relationships in contemporary performing arts between artists and artworkers in Australia and Europe,
- Including, eventually, international cultural exchange projects or activity across the two countries, such as co-productions, tours, conferences, exchange of touring work, etc
- Through the hosting of Australian producers in residence at European organisations, and European producers at Australian organisations

Who is it for?

Who can undertake a residency?

A professional producer:

- Working in any performing arts context, whether it is a venue, a festival, a company making performance work of any genre, or an independent producer who works with multiple artists and/or companies
- Who is able to commit resources to the project, at least some of their own time, more if they work for a substantially funded organisation
- Who is committed to, has the capacity, and is in a position to work with artists & organisations in the host country in the longer term beyond the residency's conclusion, including on cultural exchange projects or activity (eg co-productions, tours, conferences, exchange of touring work, etc)

Who can host a residency?

A performing arts organisation, whether a venue, a festival, a company making performance work of any genre, or an independent producer who works with multiple artists and/or companies:

- That is committed to, and in a position to work with artists & organisations in the resident producer's country in the longer term beyond the residency's conclusion, on cultural exchange projects or activity
- That is prepared to show a degree of transparency and openness, and invite the resident to observe some of its working processes, including artistic processes (rehearsals, creative developments etc), and producing and operational activities (eg non-sensitive programming discussions, staff meetings, meetings with partners)
- That is able to commit some (?) resources to the project, at the very least:

- Workspace
- Staff time to host the resident (orientation to the organisation, introductions to staff, circle of artist collaborators, stakeholders, key figures in their network/community)
- And anything further would enhance the experience for all, such as:
 - Accommodation or assistance in sourcing it, where possible (eg has accommodation on site)
 - Paid work where possible

Shared hostings are likely to be more satisfying for the resident, and more manageable for the hosts – eg a number of organisations located in the same building together, especially if it's a venue with both presenting and making spaces, ensuring a critical mass of activity

What does a resident producer do during the residency?

This will vary from case to case depending on the context, the needs and skills of both host and resident, and be negotiated between them. It could include any or all of these:

- Meet and where appropriate interview/chat with staff, artists, stakeholders, partners
- Attend public performances
- Observe artistic processes (rehearsals, creative developments etc),
- Observe producing and operational activities (eg non-sensitive programming discussions, staff meetings, meetings with partners)
- Participate in scheduled public events such as forums, talks
- Offer feedback on/discuss activities observed, where appropriate & agreed
- Undertake a creative producer or curatorial role on an event or activity produced by the host organisation, where appropriate & agreed
- Conduct a talk, forum or workshop on an area of their expertise for the host's staff, network of artists, audience or other stakeholders
- Share their knowledge of their own context (eg contacts, networks, artform practice, industry or sector structures, trends & developments)
- Continue to do their usual work alongside these activities

What is the relationship between the host and the resident? Is it necessarily reciprocal?

Reciprocity is a key principle of the project, in that we want people travelling from and to Australia, and from and to Europe. But that doesn't mean that each relationship will take the form of two organisations in a mutual exchange, a direct swap of a staff member each. That could be a great model for those two organisations, especially two organisations doing similar work – eg two contemporary festivals, one in Australia, the other in France. But it's also possible to imagine a fruitful exchange by two different sorts of organisations that isn't immediately reciprocated through a return residency. Either way, the key is that all participants are encouraged to share outcomes among the wider network.

How long should a residency be?

4 weeks minimum

Not "full time" – they are likely to need to attend to other work matters both in their home country and in the host country outside the residency itself

How is it all organised?

It could be organised directly between the two, and in practice there is nothing to stop that happening... but neither is there a mechanism or the conditions to encourage, facilitate or broker it.

So there are probably advantages of building a structure to facilitate the process, eg:

- To build a wider sense of collaboration among a number of participating organisations, and ultimately a network of on-going relationships

- To share the knowledge and experience gained through the residencies more widely
- To broker or facilitate new relationships where none currently exist
- To attract resources from cultural agencies and other potential supporters

What structure or system is needed to make it happen?

Principles

- Be lightweight, and require minimal energy and resources to maintain and operate
- Have enough transparency and openness to foster trust from participants, partners and funders, without creating a large administrative workload in managing an application and assessment process
- Have some kind of minimal application process to ensure prospective participants meet basic suitability criteria, ie operate ethically, are committed to the project's principles, able to deliver, etc (?). But not a highly selective process – not accepting an application would be a rare occurrence
- Be designed to encourage and broker dialogue between host and resident – assisting them to connect and decide if they match, with some level of brokering from the organiser if required, but not a top-down or heavily curated
- Be able to demonstrate outcomes and accountability to attract financial support from cultural agencies, without ceding the selection of projects or other details to them

A suggested structure/process

- Managed by two organisations, one in Australia (could be Intimate Spectacle), one in Europe. Each would have primary responsibility for receiving and managing funds within their territory. For now let's call them the Project Managers.
- The work of running the project is undertaken by designated staff or consultants of these bodies
- A Reference Group of 8-12 knowledgeable and respected peers across the sector assists with:
 - advice on curation, process, etc;
 - vetting of applicants;
 - suggesting or brokering potential relationships;
 - selecting residency proposals to fund, if there are funds available
 - advocacy to potential supporters & funders
- Aspiring hosts & residents lodge a short application online. Once accepted they can begin to find their match.
- While the project managers can assist with brokering, the matching needs to be driven by those involved in each relationship. The host and the resident need to contact with each other, to find common interests, a shared practice, and personal chemistry. The project provides mechanisms and forums for this to occur:
- A specially designed website where prospective hosts and residents can create a profile, to find a match. Yes, like a dating website! Dating websites, social media, and online touring production menu sites are examples of user driven online communities that facilitate relationship building. So, the users create their own profile, with information about their work and interests, (artform? context? what they can offer?, and what they are looking for from the residency (partner located where? doing what? artform? context? etc). The profile listings can be complemented by discussion groups, blogs, etc.
- The site is just one mechanism (among others) for interested participants to make contact, and they can then explore whether they want to work together by whatever means they choose – email, skype, meeting in person, etc.
- IETM Plenary meetings in particular would be an opportunity for people to meet, both informally and perhaps at networking sessions dedicated to and designed for this purpose.
- Once a host and resident have decided they want to work together, they can:
 - Just organise it between themselves, or
 - Apply for to the Producer Residency Project Manager for funds to support their residency, or
 - Raise funds elsewhere

Resourcing

For funds to establish and manage the project, and to support a number of residencies in the pilot phase (or in longer term?), apply to:

- Australia Council Theatre Board's Sector Development program (up to AUD\$40K). Apply Feb 10 or August.
- Creative Europe. New guidelines out soon, apply March? Australia can be a partner with up to 30% of activity located here.
- Potentially other European cultural agencies – British Council, Goethe Institut etc

Keep the funding model simple:

- Funding generally directed to resident's travel and/or accommodation costs.
- Everyone needs to bring something to the table – if not cash, then time, contacts, etc.
- For Australian funds – larger/well funded orgs expected to cover wages of resident. Independents or those working for smaller orgs can apply for some wage support.
- May be some funding to host's costs in particular circumstances, eg where host has strong development/training requirements and they need a very particular expertise and are willing to put in resources to secure it. Some Euro cultural agencies already fund this kind of relationship. But is this getting into territory that should be paid consultancy/work?

What to do if you are interested in being involved or commenting on this proposal

- Contact Harley Stumm or Sophie Travers, contacts below
- Join the online discussion forum at www.intimatespectacle.com.au/residencies
- Complete the short questionnaire at www.surveymonkey.com/s/producer_residencies

Harley Stumm
Sydney Australia, 9 Dec 2013

Thanks to these colleagues for their valuable contributions to developing this idea:

Daniel Brine, Cambridge Junction
Sophie Travers, Australia Council IETM Collaboration Project, Melbourne
Marie Mallaret, Extrapole, Paris
Freya Waterson, Insite Arts, Melbourne
Fiona Winning, Sydney Festival
Kath Papas, Kath Papas Productions, Melbourne
John Baylis, Stalker Theatre, Sydney

And to these organisations who have agreed to host me in researching the idea further in 2014:

Cambridge Junction, UK
Domino, Croatia
FÜGE Productions and Jurányi Art Incubator House, Hungary
Artsadmin, UK
Pacitti Company, UK
Theatre Bristol, UK

For more information or to discuss or respond, please contact:

Harley Stumm
Executive Producer, Intimate Spectacle
+614 1133 0654
harley@intimatespectacle.com.au
www.intimatespectacle.com.au

Sophie Travers
Project Director, Australia Council IETM Collaboration Project
+61 429 365 896
S.Travers@australiacouncil.gov.au
http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/about_us/our_structure/market_development/europe