

HOW TO BIENNALE! THE MANUAL

**Shwetal A. Patel, Sunil Manghani
& Robert E. D'Souza**

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**Making Art Events &
Exhibitions in the Age
of Institutional
Hybridity & Globalisation**

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& Robert E. D'Souza**

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

While hardly matching with the same verve and outright cheek, this book pays homage to *The Manual (How to Have a Number One the Easy Way)*, published thirty years ago by The KLF, 'pop's greatest provocateurs', who also handed out the alternative Turner Prize and burnt one million pounds (not something this book necessarily advocates, indeed — if equally an indulgence — both prize and money would come in useful for much that is discussed here).

Also, it must be said, this is hardly a manual at all. If there is one thing to learn from all of this, it is that there is no manual, no one set of instructions to make it all come true. This, then, is a manual for one, for YOU, however you may wish to use or abuse it. In the spirit of René Magritte's *Les trahison des images*: this is NOT a manual (though it may well look like one).

WHERE DO WE START?

Our insights will be shot through with distort rays and we will revel
in our own inconsistencies. If parts get too boring just fast forward
— all the way to the end if need be.

— The KLF, *The Manual*, (1988).

MAKING ART EVENTFUL...

Be ready to take in a lot of different ideas and to wrestle with various competing needs and interests. Be ready for a little luck too, as much as cast-iron planning. Because it is only by following the advice given in this book (as well as drawing on the wisdom and support of many friends and associates) that you can properly realise your dream of putting on an art event.

Why make art *eventful*? Isn't it enough to go to your local art gallery or simply look at artworks via an app? The answer of course is quite simply 'no'. It is not enough. Art and creativity are uniquely bound up with what it means to be human. We make things, we share things, we reflect on things. And we make things again. Art is always eventful, always moving. Yet perhaps we are too adept at placing art in a box, including placing it (and cataloguing it!) in museums. This book is about freeing up art, or at least the situations in which we encounter it. As a 'manual' this book may well state the obvious in places. And elsewhere it may contradict itself or be less relevant to your precise needs. Where this happens you can simply skip those sections. And should you find something is missing we hope at least you feel prompted to fill in the gaps. No manual is complete without putting things into action. We encourage you to be practical and to experiment.

So, where to begin? A great deal of this book is based on our close relationship with 'art biennales' or 'art biennials' to use the alternative spelling. Crucially, biennales, of which today there are hundreds around the world (see Appendix), have become an important format or device for taking art out of the box, placing it in new contexts and reaching new audiences.

“Biennial” is derived from the Latin word *biennium*, which designates a period of two years. Triennials are held every three years, quadriennials every four years. This framework can be applied not only to art exhibitions, but also to festivals and even conferences. Due to the influence of the first, most well-known exhibition of its kind, the Biennale di Venezia [Venice Biennale], the term is often used to

refer to exhibitions of the visual arts — later it was also applied to film, music and architecture biennials when these were introduced in Venice and in São Paulo.

This is how the art critic Sabine B. Vogel introduces the term in her book *Biennials — Art on a Global Scale*. Like her, we adopt the word ‘Biennale’ as an umbrella term, so allowing us to encompass a wide and heterogeneous range of visual art exhibitions, or more broadly visual art events. There is a history to biennales, even we might say a ‘biennale culture’, but equally they represent structures of constant change and adaptation. It is this spirit of change and innovation we boldly urge you to take up and make your own.

The many and wonderful galleries and museums at our disposal around the world give access to all sorts of artworks, histories and archives. Rooted in the practices of the Enlightenment, which spurred not only our thirst for knowledge, but also the methods for unlocking, maintaining and regulating it, the ‘collections’ of today’s museums offer vital resource, helping us to relate to cultures, ideas and history; to maintain our cultural heritage; and simply to take pleasure and inspiration. Museums and galleries have come to be seen as important institutions within the broader fabric of our ‘public sphere’ — which is to suggest of a site or sites where we can think freely, exchange ideas and raise questions and issues. Yet, equally, it has long been known that the art world can be elitist, exclusionary and ‘difficult’ to understand. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, for example, has demonstrated how not only can we refer to economic capital, but also social and cultural capital. In his well-known book, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (first published in French in 1979), he argues that those with high ‘cultural capital’ are most likely those who determine the ‘tastes’ of society, which in turn can quickly exclude those with lower cultural capital (so prompting a self-perpetuating cycle of privilege). Such capital derives from non-financial social assets, such as education and social mobility. Regardless of whether or not two people may have the economic means to enter a museum, which can be made free to enter, for example, there is also required a set of habits and understanding that allow someone to feel able to enter such a space. Bourdieu argued how different educational backgrounds altered individual perceptions of art, with some expecting objects to ‘fulfil a function’ and others attuned to the idea of an aesthetic realm beyond everyday life. The formation

of ‘dominant’ tastes, according to Bourdieu, amounted to ‘symbolic violence’, or a form of hegemonic power. Not only is the formation of good tastes a privilege, but also the acquisition of good taste is a subtle means of dominance, ensuring the status quo. In Marxist terms, for example, Bourdieu argued that ‘the working-class “aesthetic” is a dominated aesthetic, which is constantly obliged to define itself in terms of the dominant aesthetics’ of the ruling class. Despite the fact his work relates back to empirical research conducted during the 1960s, the book, *Distinction*, according to the International Sociological Association, remains one of the ten most important sociology books of the 20th century. His work, and similar studies that followed, prompted a great deal of debate and controversy about the provisions of arts in society and the need for ‘access’ that goes well beyond simple economic considerations, but rather concerns deeper barriers based upon social and cultural grounds.

Today, biennales have arguably emerged as one of the key markers and drivers of contemporary exhibition-making, which by equal measure can be said to fall into the trap of the few setting trends and tastes for the many, as well as opening up not only new audiences for contemporary visual art, but also the very conditions in which we come to view art. If museums and gallery exhibitions have for the past century been the medium through which we access and receive art, then today it is perhaps the biennale exhibition that is the ‘medium’ through which new forms of art and artistic practice are introduced. The shift in influence from museum to biennale develops slowly in post-war Europe, shortly followed by a ‘second wave’ of biennales outside of Europe, notably with the advent of the São Paulo Biennial founded in 1951. During this period of economic growth and globalisation, certainly through to the 1960’s, artists were primarily shown in museums and galleries. Works were created in the knowledge that they would be displayed, consumed and contextualised in such institutional spaces. Yet, in parallel to this growing institutionalism of modern art, the avant-garde were becoming restless within the confines of the museum space and began to break away from ‘the static atmosphere of the museum’ by organising their own ‘happenings and concerns’. Speaking in 1971, Harold Szeeman, one of the first self-declared ‘independent curators’, observed that artists were working with a new purpose, principally engaging with social and political concerns. Szeeman stated (somewhat prophetically at the time) that ‘artists are no longer interested in getting into the museum, but want to conduct their activities on a wider stage,

for example the municipality'. Today, with well over 100 biennales taking place across the world in any given year, we have become ever more familiar with this format. As Chris McAuliffe suggests in this 'Explainer: what is a biennale?' in *The Conversation*, '[c]hances are you've heard of an art biennale, even if you haven't visited one'. He goes on to outline the phenomenon as follows:

Biennales are large-scale exhibitions of contemporary art, named for their host city and typically managed by a combination of public art museums, government agencies and philanthropic supporters. As for the two- or three-year cycle, that's simply a reflection of the time required to organise a large exhibition. Originally more of a specialised, art-world affair, biennales now figure in the cultural menu supported by state and local government tourism agencies. A successful biennale will draw tens, even hundreds of thousands of visitors.

McAuliffe goes on to suggest of the emotive powers of the biennale format:

Because each biennale is a brief, one-off event (usually of about 12 week's duration), visitation is driven by an intensive promotional 'call to action'. Increasingly marketing strategies focus on emotive effects, emphasising the biennale as an 'experience' rather than as a formal cultural affair. [...] The titles of the 2014 Adelaide Biennial — 'Dark Heart' — and Biennale of Sydney — 'You Imagine What You Desire' — evoke emotional states. The curator of the first promises 'a moving experience' and the second, 'splendor and rapture'. Canny organisers amplify these emotional effects with unusual venues (abandoned factories are a favourite), hands-on and interactive art works, and the placement of striking sculptures or installations in familiar public spaces.

Not all biennales need to be large in scale or follow these now well-trodden tropes. Not all need even to be called biennales. What this book hopes to show is that art can always be innovative, experimental and eventful. Whether we crave spectacle or political action (or both), art can still *move us*, if we are willing to be moved by it, and so redefine what we can be in the process!

DO WE NEED ANOTHER ONE?

'The Ford model and the model hit song are all of a piece'
— Theodor Adorno, 'The Culture Industry'

In the context of the Second World War, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno's 'Dialectic of Enlightenment' (1944), offered its prophetic warning as to the damage wrought by unchecked 'intellectual standardization' and the 'systemisation of culture' upon mass society. The oppression that comes through what they termed the 'culture industry' is based on those very schemes it proposes and affirms as a source of freedom, resulting in 'a canon of synthetically produced models of behaviour'. Since the time of their writing the critical significance of the 'culture industry' has only escalated, and always despite the apparent attempts of art to escape its incorporation. Ever in the shadow of this pessimistic prognosis, we might be forgiven for thinking every biennale, every art event, is just one of many, and only more of the same. Indeed, how can anyone operating within these sites of practice (which require a great deal organisation, finance and partnerships) resist the clutches of standardisation and homogenisation?

If, in our contemporary, global circumstance, artistic practice is to be allowed to develop freely, to experiment and deviate from the norm, we must explore how collective, large-scale modes of operation might resist the self-propagating structures and forces of the culture industry, with its capitalist, imperialist antecedents. To consider, then, how we might be allowed to thrive on chaos, to allow for 'better failure' and uncertainty, with a view to produce the sublime, the spiritual and the transformational. We want to produce art, not institutions; to exchange, not transmit. And, if biennales are to 'matter' (to continue to recur materially, and to be of value to us social and culturally) their mode of practice must be understood and indeed *practiced*. Rather than feel we must fulfil some pre-defined expectation or adopt some kind of 'model' of practice, we should look to who we are, where we are and who we want to be with, in order to make, curate and view art. Art is at its best when it is different and subversive, when it challenges the 'now' and when it offers the potential of resistance. Let's not

stage yet more events for event's sake. Indeed, this manual is NOT aimed at those needing A-B instructions for planning and staging an event, whether a biennale or otherwise. Instead, to make things truly eventful, for things of value to *happen* to all those involved (front-and backstage), this book urges you to begin again: To re-consider the very ground upon which things take place. The Kochi-Muziris Biennale, in the state of Kerala, India, is one very good example of an art event that arose ground-up, and which has continued to challenge itself as much of those attending the event. Well-known for having come to fruition 'against all odds', Riyas Komu, one of the founders of the project, notes how the best art will survive if we take risks. He suggests the Kochi Biennale itself has 'become a kind of synonym for getting artists ready to take risks'. And in this sense, in being asked repeatedly how the Biennale was put together, the only real answers he feels he can give are 'answers which are dated'. The Biennale gets *made again*, each time: 'What happens in every edition of the Biennale' he suggests, 'is that risk comes back. Every edition of the Biennale is almost a new project. [...] We start afresh every time.'

Kochi-Muziris Biennale, India

The journey of the Biennale started with the execution of the project because we got people to walk along with us; we got the community to walk along; we got young artists to walk along; and we got senior Indian contemporary artists to walk along with the dream. It is almost like the Biennale has taken a revolutionary step to walk with people and that is the kind of space artists need to change the existing perceptions. — Riyas Komu

The inaugural Kochi-Muziris Biennale opened at 12-noon on the 12th day of the 12th month of 2012. At first glance, Kochi is a somewhat surprising location for India's first biennale, being outside of the recognized centres of Indian contemporary art. Yet, the region of Kerala plays host to a number of global cultural events, and the decision to host the Kochi-Muziris Biennale came in effect from the top. Kerala's cultural minister approached artists Bose Krishnamachari and Riyas Komu, asking them 'to suggest an event that would reaffirm the state's position on the cultural map'; and the final decision was made in the Prime Minister's office in New Delhi. However, the initial approach by the cultural minister to two practicing artists was significant. Both Kerala-born, astute to the context they were working in, they took an artist-led approach, forming community with both participating artists and local residents and traders. It is an approach that has proved distinct for this particular biennale and its relationship to the state.

Like any other densely populated, fast-growing city, Kochi is overcrowded and suffers all the usual problems of urbanization. Yet it is also culturally 'rich'. It has a highly literate society and is host to significant populations of differing faiths. The city's cosmopolitan roots, as the centre of India's spice trade, dates back to ancient times when Muziris was a thriving port, and its more recent political history with a long-term communist government has maintained a very lively, politicized populace. If it is possible to stage a biennale that is more than mere global spectacle, Kochi would seem as good a place to start. Of course, it was

never simply a matter of curating an art event. Establishing a biennale from scratch required dealing with politicians, bureaucrats, business people, journalists, vendors, contractors, volunteers and the local community more broadly. '[I]n a country like India,' the founders note, 'where art has a long history and which has produced some of the finest contemporary visual artists, the "culture of biennale" [was] yet to catch on. The word "biennale"...yet to be popular on the street.' They were determined not to let the biennale be elitist, and established a 'Let's Talk' programme to re-engage the media and to connect directly with the local community:

We printed brochures in Malayalam and distributed among [the] general public. We shot photographs of... autorickshaw drivers, street vendors, shopkeepers and pedestrians with "It's My Biennale" posters. We went into college campuses, schools, art clubs and organized many cultural and literary programmes in parks and other public places. Theatre Sketches travelled in Ernakulam and neighbouring districts to spread the word about the biennale.

The initiative paid off, as one of the most visible elements of Kochi's inaugural Biennale was its heterogeneous audience. However, what visitors arrived to was by no means a well-orchestrated event. The late withholding of funds was one significant pressure, but so was the relatively poor infrastructure. There was a general lack of technical experience and the use of derelict and former colonial buildings made the preparation of exhibition spaces extremely challenging. Even as delegates made their way round the opening of the exhibitions wall captions were still being applied and catalogues being printed. Attending the biennale launch in 2012 was to witness a work-in-progress, not least with Bose Krishnamachari, Riyas Komu and the founding team engaged hands-on with all aspects of the work involved to bring the exhibition spaces to fruition on time (or at least as close to on time as possible). This hands-on approach and the rawness of the exhibition spaces have been seen by many as a refreshing riposte to the 'non-spaces' we typically associate with art fairs and biennales around the world.

(Adapted from D'Souza and Manghani, eds. *India's Biennale Effect: A Political of Contemporary Art*, Routledge, 2016.)

BEING INTERNATIONAL, STAYING LOCAL

The first Biennale was held in Italy, the Venice Biennale, which was established in 1893 by the Venetian City Council. However, this was an exhibition of Italian Art only, in celebration of the silver anniversary of King Umberto I. It was a year later the council decreed to adopt an invitation system, to introduce the work of foreign artists too, with the first proper *international* Biennale in Venice being opened in April 1895, attracting up to 224,000 visitors. The event has been held ever since, every two years.

Subsequent biennales included the Corcoran Biennial in Washington in 1907 and the Whitney Biennial in New York in 1932, though these again had only a national focus. It was not until 1951 that the original, international model of the Venice Biennale was adopted again with the São Paulo Biennale in Brazil. Since then, the emergence of an apparent biennale model has proliferated, having now been popularised and multiplied around the world, redefining the political-economics and aesthetics of so called 'international art'. Today, more than two hundred biennials exist in diverse (and often unexpected) locations. The format's growth in the second half of the 20th century, as exemplified by the creation of what has been termed 'second wave' biennales (from the 1951 Bienal de São Paulo to the 1968 Triennale India and the Third Bienal de la Habana in 1984), led to a 'biennale boom' in the 1990s with a marked increase in the creation of new biennales. In particular, at the turn of the new millennium, biennales has been appearing across the developing world, or what is termed as the global South by a generation of scholars invested in post-colonial, globalisation and developmental discourses.

Although some important biennales, such as in Tokyo (1951), Paris (1959), Johannesburg (1995) and Melbourne (1999), are now defunct, many new biennales have sustained, even if missing some editions, or vastly reconfiguring in scale, reach and scope. As Grandal Montero has argued, the success and longevity

of the format is attributable to the ‘versatility, resilience and high degree of popularity’ of biennales, which hold the promise of *things to come* — in short the promise of the new. In just one year, Havana and three other new biennials were launched in 1984, and by the mid-1990s more than 60 were in existence, mostly in cities, and represented in all continents. Overall, the number of new biennials, triennials and the like have stayed stable and are still rising today, with newly created events vastly outnumbering discontinued ones.

So what is the significance of being international? And what about being local? Art biennales and other recurring art events can be large or small. They can be widely reported or go unsung. They can be internationally recognised, or pertain very much to the local setting. Or, of course, they can be a mixture of all these things. The Liverpool Biennial, for example, is described as the largest international contemporary art festival in the United Kingdom. Every two years, it hosts a wide range of artworks, projects, and a programme of events. This includes artworks from leading and emerging artists, who are invited to make both permanent and temporary public artworks, but also involves long-term community-based projects. Over the last ten years, the Liverpool Biennial is estimated to have had an economic impact of £119.6 million and the 2014 edition attracted nearly 877,000 visits. It is clearly international in its purview, but equally focused very much on its locale and the people who live there. In 2008, for example, the Liverpool Biennial was part of the city’s year as European Capital of Culture, which was a key opportunity for the reinvigoration of (and investment in) the city’s unique identity. Subsequent ‘Culture City’ initiatives, such as in Cork and Hull, for example, have similarly incorporated large-scale contemporary art exhibitions as ways of attracting national and international interest (and tourism), as well as thinking critically and creatively about what it means to live and work in the city.

And events can be smaller still, with perhaps less recognition, but with no less significance for the places and people that they relate to. The Peckham Festival in South East London, for example, describes itself as a ‘hyper-local festival with a single aim of celebrating creative and cultural Peckham’. The Festival promotes ‘artists, makers, creators, and community groups with a particular focus on an inclusive approach to the BME, youth and LGBTQI groups within the area’. It was established in 2016, and has become a Community Interest Company,

‘proud to continue to be free to the public and 100% not for profit’. Overall, then, biennales, and other recurring art events with close associations with specific sites and audiences, typically appear to strive for a balance between localism and globalism, artistic and cultural agency and cross-cultural difference, whilst often too — as with the Liverpool Biennale and the Edinburgh Festival — asserting cultural prowess and soft power on the international stage. Importantly, the global proliferation of biennales has irrevocably challenged the ‘predominance of certain EuroAmerican art centres, such as Paris and New York — not as markets, but as [sole] art-producing localities’. This is how Terry Smith describes the situation in his essay ‘Biennials Within The Contemporary Composition’. Biennials can even appear as an antidote to severe social and political concerns. The first Colombo biennale in Sri Lanka, in 2009, for example, was themed in direct response to and indeed characterised by artists coming together in the immediate situation after the civil war. Biennales, then, have been related to ameliorating crises of post-conflict societies, as well as reviving depressed economic regions, which not only places one on the ‘global art map’ but also improves property prices, encourages inward investment for job creation and attracts talent and fosters innovation.

However, for all of the positive narratives we can attribute to biennales, there are significant issues at stake. The globalisation of the artworld is frequently seen in terms of postmodern relativism that sustained democratisation through the pluralisation of the art scene. As the art historian Charlotte Bydler has articulated in her dissertation, ‘The Global Art World, Inc.’, art and artists have long held a fascination and love affair with travel, cosmopolitanism and internationalism. Our cosmopolitan desires are bound up with an Enlightenment fascination with ‘other worlds’ and the promise of universality. International biennales have arguably become ‘spectacular arenas’ for the intersection of internationalism and nationalism. In the essay ‘The Black Box’, (in Documenta_11 Platform 5 exhibition catalogue, 2002), Okwui Enwezor argues that globalisation is linked to a ‘double move’ of post-coloniality: on the one hand it embodies a liberating strategy of decolonisation, while on the other it ‘exceeds the borders of the former colonized world to lay claim to the modernized, metropolitan world of empire by making empire’s former “other” visible and present at all times, either through the media or through mediatory, spectatorial, and carnivalesque relations of language, communication, images, contact, and resistance within

the everyday'. Enwezor goes on to argue that postcoloniality must at all times be distinguished from postmodernism, arguing that while postmodernism was preoccupied with 'relativizing historical transformations and contesting the lapses and prejudices of epistemological grand narratives, postcoloniality does the obverse, seeking instead to sublimate and replace all grand narratives through new ethical demands on modes of historical interpretation'.

Nonetheless, today, the proliferation of events around the world signals various shifts in the 'centres' of the art-world. Made clear, for example, in the number and diversity of locations hosting biennials, where an overwhelmingly *local* agenda is routinely intersected with the global. Although, of course, rather than decentralising the art world, globalisation may in fact further cement Western art history's hegemony, if the direction of the communication (and assimilation) is one way. Indeed, the 'globalisation of the art world' in recent years has also led to a growing sense of homogenisation in art production and discourse, supported by an ever growing 'art market' and itinerant globe trotting artists, cultural tourists, cultural producers, curators, corporate sponsors and media personnel. In coordination with rapidly expanding markets, fuelled through rampant and unregulated capitalism or the 'hegemony of industrial capitalism', standardisations have similarly spread across the art world with veracity and often scant concern for local and regional site-specificities. We must ask ourselves — not least in terms of the kinds of events we may wish to establish and propagate — do we risk a certain 'flattening' of contemporary visual art and its related discourses? If so, what can we do to mitigate homogenising forces? I.e. what can YOU do to make events worthwhile and of value to wider society?

French curator and art critic, Nicolas Bourriaud, has argued that in fact a newly reconfigured modernity, which he labels 'altermodernity', has emerged as a direct result of globalisation. He posits that increased communication, travel and migration are affecting the way we live, and that a focus upon multiculturalism and identity concerns are being overtaken by creolisation and the changing 'public sphere'. He asserts that this new universalism is based on translations, and that today's art can potentially explore the 'bonds that text and image, time and space, weave between themselves'. In Bourriaud's world-view, artists are 'increasingly traversing myriad cultural landscapes saturated with signs to create new pathways between multiple formats of expression and communication',

providing ascent to the emergence of a global 'altermodernity'. Is this something we can partake in when establishing our own approach to contemporary art exhibition? And is 'translation' and 'sharing' enough?

Writing in 1993, at the beginning of the (global south-oriented) 'biennale boom', Thomas McEvilley suggested the postmodern shift of emphasis from 'centres' to 'margins', meant that any city could act as an international hub. As such, biennales in these cities could offer new audiences and cultural functions of their own. In the case of Triennale India of 1968, for example, he suggests that many artists of that era came to accept their multicultural heritage, and were interested in forging cooperation between East and West through incorporating elements of the other without losing a sense of selfhood. To quote the father of the Indian nation state, M.K Gandhi: 'I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any'. It is this steadfastness, in amongst the swirl of other voices and perspectives that 'being international, staying local', encapsulates. It is observable that, increasingly, museums and art institutions around the world tend to have uniform appearances in their layout and administrative faculties — and in certain regards with the art that is displayed. Largely, in format and content alike, they cater to and follow 'Western' examples. Many biennales, like art fairs, can be said to be very similar too. Yet, equally the staging of biennales and other art events, which are both defined by local circumstances and interest, yet also precarious and temporal, have allowed different propensities and perspectives to prevail.

HAVING A VISION

ABANDON ALL ART NOW.

Major rethink in progress. Await further announcements.

It has come to our attention that you did not abandon all art now.
Further direct action is thus necessary.

— The K Foundation, advertisement copy, (1994).

HOW TO BE DISTINCTIVE (MUST IT BE EVERY TWO YEARS?)

First and foremost, let's be clear, not everything goes to plan. A biennale does not have to be every 2 years, and a festival does not *have* to be every year etc., but of course if you set out to do something (and tell the world that that is what you are doing) it is nice if you can stick to the plan. But stuff happens. It can't all be perfect. It is better to be distinctive than merely perfect. This in mind, this Manual — the one in your hand (or perhaps upon the screen) — is not really meant as a *manual* or anything nearly as prescriptive as that. You may think biennials have become prescriptive and formulaic in themselves and we should be seeking new models and systems rather than replicate the same old tried and tested tropes. You may be right but the reason why some models and systems work and have come to dominate in the world is because they work! Biennales have been extremely successful in the last 120 years or so and more recently since the 1990's in producing and spreading awareness about art and engaging new audiences around the world. In that sense this particular book is more a manifesto or clarion call for further thought and action regarding the future of art in society. Like The KLF's *The Manual*, it is a manifesto to make things happen. When we say 'How to Biennale!' we really mean 'Make it Happen!' (and the way YOU want it to happen). It is encouragement to find your own path and rhythm. This book is merely a way to help you chart some of the steps and to consider what has gone before. You may choose to ignore most or everything in this book, and that might well be the best possible start! When the original Manual (on having a hit single) was written in the late 1980's by The Timelords (Bill Drummond and Jimmy Cauty), better known as The KLF, Britain was a very different place. The Tate Modern didn't exist and much of what we call contemporary British art didn't exist, at least not in the way we understand things today. The revolution in contemporary British art started around the same time, in the milieu that led to the creation of *The Manual* and it is therefore timely to revisit this prolific period in recent British history. Much has been written and said as to why Britain in the 1980s was so artistically

influential and this is not the place for such a discussion, but it is simply true to say that it was a revolutionary DIY-led period, a time seemingly nothing could hold you back if you really wanted to make it happen. We need that spirit today more so than ever. We can't hide behind the disastrous government funding cuts or the rapacious, hegemonic nature of the art and property markets, if we really want to do something, really really want to do it, then we should try and we just might succeed, or at least find that we had moved things along sufficiently enough that others are inspired to take over where we left off.

A number of mutations and divergent strands within 'biennial culture' and its discourses have emerged more recently. This is most apparent since the 1980's and the growth in global South biennales. A period which saw the emergence of a spate of new host cities in the Southern hemisphere and developing world, including, Havana (1984), Istanbul (1987), and latterly in the 1990's, Dak'Art in Dakar, (1990), Sharjah (1993), Shanghai (1994) and Gwangju (1995). According to research conducted by Grandal Montero, the majority of biennales, as of 2011, were still located in Europe (50+), followed by Asia (20+) and then the Americas (20+). What is revealing is the locus of growth in recent years being firmly in Asia, where numerous examples of high-profile new biennales have been created since the mid-1990s (Gwangju, Shanghai, Busan, Guangzhou, Beijing, Singapore), following wider economic and political changes. More recently instigated biennales exist in various stages of gestation and development in cities across Asia, include those in Kochi-Muziris (2012), Yinchuan (2016), Lahore (2017), Karachi (2017) and Srinager (2018).

In the United Kingdom there are over 12 biennale-style events in existence, which points to the vitality of the art scene and its geographical spread into the provinces and sites outside of London (which typically dominates the art scene). *How to Biennale! The Manual* is aimed at being a conduit for exchange and learning between these disparate and largely *non*-networked arts organisations, so seeking to share the hopes and fears, and tackling the common challenges faced as we all try to *biennale* the best way we can. Again, then, this book is not really a manual or guide of any kind, but simply a way to reflect, share and inspire each other to think differently and inventively about what we do and why.

As we cling to this wave of optimism, some things to keep in mind:

- The Arts are inspiring in their diversity and hybrid nature; no two artists are ever the same and have exactly the same vision. Your art event needs to be distinctive and unique and serve to fulfil its own mission. As the saying goes, it's the people that make the party, in this case it will be the people (or audiences more broadly) that will help you become distinctive and authentic in your practise as a biennale maker.
- Biennales operate without any authoritative, supra-national body imposing rules of functioning or common practise. There are no commonly-accepted minimum standards and/or procedures. Whether as a result or cause of this, the biennale as a model may in fact evade definition: the sole common thread being their cyclical, recurring and event-based features, i.e. being temporary. (The very lack of any supra-national oversight or minimum requirements may be a significant driver of the propagation and multiplication of this typology in modern and contemporary exhibition-making, allowing for open interpretations, rapid evolution, and organisational autonomy, in an increasingly globalised, standardised and interconnected political-cultural sphere).
- Of course, despite the freedom to think differently, the appearance of a new biennale or art event inevitably elicits certain expectations with regards its characteristics and modalities. Instigators and organisers of new biennales are often quizzed by the uninitiated as to 'how they were able to lure such a prestigious institution'. Theoretically, anyone, anywhere, can start a biennale in a diverse range and mode of avatars. For a new biennale to gain international prominence however, critical validation, mostly emanating from the Western-centre, is necessary.
- In his 2004 essay 'Where are the Artists?', Daniel Buren suggests we are nearing the situation when we will have large-scale international exhibition 'without any artists at all'! He argues the power structures are all but entrenched in the artworld of the 21st century. He doesn't dismiss the vital role of the organiser in exhibition making, (he respects

the importance of artwork selection, exhibition design and mise-en-scène, for example), but he laments the over-bearing dominance of the organiser-author in modern large-scale international exhibitions (for which we might read biennales!). It is worth considering how ‘being distinctive’ might equate to not controlling everything, but allowing for chance, for differences, for play.

WHERE TO HAVE A BIENNALE (AND WHERE TO PUT THINGS)

The late writer and art critic, Robert Hughes, once said ‘the new job of art is to sit on the wall and get more expensive.’ Today, art and culture is increasingly used as a vital ingredient in creative *place-making*. Indeed, with the growing *biennialisation* of the art world, and growth of new cultural districts and public and private museums, there is an increasing critical tension between the growth of art ‘events’ and the notion of art ‘engagement’. The latter is something that is often desired but only seldom achieved, although perhaps it is our shorter attention spans that are part of the issue (a symptom of the hyperkinetic world we live in today). This tension leads us to question the autonomy of arts organisations whilst also questioning the nature of contemporary art production and its dissemination and popularisation, generally measured quite crudely in terms of audience numbers, revenue earned, tax contributions, construction and real estate development or sales figures.

Nonetheless, the significance of place and landscape to an artist work is everything. Andy Goldsworthy, one of the UK’s leading contemporary artists, comments on the importance of space and site-specificities:

My art is a way of learning in which instincts guide best. It is also very physical — I need the shock of touch, the resistance of place, materials and weather, the earth as my source. It is a collaboration, a meeting-point between my own and earth’s nature... Looking, touching, material, place, making, the form and resulting work are integral... Place is found by walking, direction determined by weather and season. I am a hunter, I take the opportunities each day offers — if it is snowing, I work with snow, at leaf-fall it will be leaves, a blown-over tree becomes a source of twigs and branches. I stop at a place or pick up material by feeling that there is something to discover.

— Andy Goldsworthy, 1990.

Place and site are central to the successful imbedding of your art event in a given location. Understanding the *community* in which you will situate yourself is vital. In fact, identifying your sites is an exciting part of the overall project. In the same way Goldsworthy describes, it means walking the streets and wider terrain to find the ideal locations. Your event, like many biennales, may have multiple sites, or you may be working in one central site. Either way you will have to identify, secure and get permissions to use these spaces for your programme. If the sites you choose are already used for the arts activities you are planning, then permissions and other art production-related concerns might be easier — though not necessarily so distinctive. If the site you have chosen for your art event is not normally used for an art programme or event (empty warehouse, open fields, the moon!), you may need to get the relevant permissions and you must be sure you are able to use the spaces.

Once you have secured your site, you will need to ensure that you are making preparations for your art event. Never *underestimate* the importance of your technicians!

For more on event planning, see:

www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/event-planning-checklist

MAKING IT HAPPEN!

That truth is: If you want to do something. REALLY want to do something, don't wait to be asked. Don't seek permission. Don't put off until you have passed the right exams or saved up enough money. But be prepared to risk complete failure. Don't give a shit about whatever your mates or your girlfriend or boyfriend think. Whatever it is — start now, today. Tomorrow is always too late.

— Bill Drummond, *Prologue to The Manual* (2015).

CHOOSING A MODEL (MORE THAN THE SUM OF YOUR PARTS)

No two art events are ever the same, even subsequent editions of the same art event will differ in a multitude of ways, therefore there is really no one model to follow or one that will work in all contexts and environments, all of the time. It is therefore better to build and develop a ‘unique model’ that works for you and your vision as an art event and arts organisation, keeping in mind your mission and the interests of your key stakeholders, including your envisaged audience.

The more important thing is to Make it Happen! And with that, to constantly revise and refine your strategy to adapt to the challenges and site-specific scenarios that emerge as your event goes through planning stages to becoming a reality.

Choosing a model is more than just the sum of its parts. It is a way of doing things. It is an approach. Successful models are made up of a multitude of moving parts and it is your duty to ensure that the model you choose and develop is fit for its intended purpose. Getting the approach right — according to your specific needs, interests and context — can lead to workflow efficiencies, funding opportunities and stability and sustainability over the difficult months, and even perhaps years, it will take to build your art event. (Hang-on in there!)

Biennales have traditionally been created with the combination of, or individually by strong-headed patrons, local and national governments, their cultural ministries, affiliated arts councils and cultural agencies, as well as entrepreneurs, not-for profit organisations such as residencies and local artists, as well as visionary curators. These ‘agents’ co-interact with ‘fields of power’ within political society, responding to diverse interests and aspirations, resulting in very distinctive models, subject to variations and modifications over time. Where do you fit within such a list? If you are acting alone do you need more back-up? If so, from whom, from where? If you’re working in consort with others, do you have the right mix?

Who is in the mix and for what reasons? These are important questions to ponder, but no need to dwell upon these issues. Remember: *Making it happen*, or at least getting things off the ground in the first place is key!

Gallerist and pioneer of happenings, René Block, has suggested a biennale typology based on the type of organisation:

01. Venice Biennale (est. 1895)

- A grand world exhibition with national representations in dedicated pavilions.
- Large group exhibitions, symposia, film screenings and performance.

The Venetian model has also popularised the collateral programme of the art event, with many hundreds of official and unofficial satellite events taking place throughout Venice and the surrounding islands.

02. Sydney Biennale (est. 1973)

- Characterising smaller scale biennales organised around a curatorial theme, usually led by a single artistic director or chief curator,
- Budgets and artist funding dependent on external financial support; sponsors, local government and cultural tourists.

03. Gwangju Biennale (est. 1995)

- Biennales that select artists autonomously from represented countries;
- Held in purpose-built venues supported by a foundation with public and private funding sources.

04. Manifesta (est. 1996)

- A roving model from city to city

- Funded centrally through the EU and the host city/region and public/private sponsors.

(Adapted from René Block's opening speech, *Biennials in Dialogue* Conference, Kassel, Documenta Halle, August 3-6, 2000).

Another category of biennales has also emerged specifically as agent and catalyst of economic and social development, with the aim of revitalising formerly depressed regions and cultural backwaters to international prominence.

Art Historian Charlotte Bydler adds the consideration of layout and funding to these classifications, suggesting that today biennales and periodical art events have shifted away from the nationalistic representation of the 19th Century World Expos. She goes on to suggest another alternative set of categorizations that fall into roughly three groupings:

01. Capitalist-philanthropic exercises initiated at the end of the nineteenth century, several of which were initiated by 'strong-headed patrons' (the Venice Biennale, the Carnegie International and later also the São Paulo, Sydney and Istanbul biennales);
02. Bloc politic or underdevelopmentalist reactions initiated in the post-World War II period, evident in documenta, Triennale India, the Havana Biennale, Dak'Art;
03. Flexible production-and event-orientated variety of the 1990's and 2000s including the Gwangju Biennial, Manifesta, Marrakech, Liverpool and Sharjah Biennale.

(Adapted from Charlotte Bydler's *The Global ArtWorld Inc: On the Globalization of Contemporary Art*, Uppsala University Press, 2004).

But that is enough of models and typologies for now. You can return to these matters later. Of course it is good to know where you might be heading (stay true to your course!), but equally it is okay to classify what you have done after you have done it. First things first, get things done. For that you need a team.

BUILDING A TEAM

Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success. — Henry Ford

Building a team is perhaps the single most important organisational responsibility that you will face while creating and planning your art event. The team you select and build will be with you through thick and thin and it's important that all the best people working for your art event are effective and suited for your particular model and purpose. Remember, it's all about making it happen, so choose the people that will help you to deliver on the mission and vision of your art event. Working with friends has its positives and negatives and it's up to you to see what works best for your particular set of challenges and the overall mission.

Operations

Your team is the life and soul of your arts organisation, without them nothing would be possible. Even if you are a one woman/man show, you will still need to work with other people to make your art event a reality and sustainable success.

Always pay particular attention to your core staff, the hours and salaries that will attract and retain suitably qualified arts professionals, and that each team member contributes to the programmes or services of the organisation. If your arts organisation expands in size and you need to hire more people, ensure that you observe the government rules on employment standards and to provide a mechanism for staff feedback. (The www.careers.ox.ac.uk/arts-heritage site has information and resources for employers, including legal templates for hiring staff, maintaining employee records and terminating contracts.)

Arts organisations are recommended to seek independent legal and professional advice when planning and updating employee and consultant contracts, policies and insurances. Providing clear guidelines for employees and consultants is

essential to the smooth functioning of your arts organisation and the events you produce. Arts organisers must follow all Work Health and Safety practices under applicable national legislation. If your art event intends to work with children, students and vulnerable/sick people, you will need to register with the relevant authorities and obtain all permissions and clearances in advance. For more information visit www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/policies-procedures/children-and-vulnerable-adults-safeguarding-policy

Every arts organisation is usually ambitious in achieving its goals, and it is tempting to think big and experiment at every turn. However organisations need to consider their available resources when developing programs and events ensuring that these are deliverable and sustainable. You should be mindful before expanding programmes and ensure that funding/resources are available before committing to any new and/or unplanned activities.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Arts organisations are encouraged to collaborate and partner with local, national and international organisations, artists and curators. Collaborations and partnerships can provide an opportunity for encouraging creative dialogue, reducing duplication of costs and maximising the use of available resources. You can consider streamlining programmes as well as sharing overheads (shared offices) and resources through collaboration. In the context of limited funding, rising costs and a focus on arts hubs, your arts organisation and event may wish to explore merging with like-minded arts organisations in your local area and region. Your local council or city may own existing arts facilities and could provide you with infrastructure for a range of arts activities, programmes and initiatives. Go and meet the staff and personnel at your local arts organisations to get a sense of their work and to explore possible synergies.

Remember:

All collaborations and partnerships should be carefully planned and be included in the budget, as part of the standard reporting procedure to staff and stakeholders. Be clear from the start about the nature and scope of collaborations and partnerships to save any dilemmas in the future!

Charitable Trust (or Non-profit Foundation)

There are many benefits to starting a Charitable Trust (or Non-profit Foundation) to manage your arts organisation. There are many considerations to take into account and you should consult a legal and financial advisor to ensure that this is the best model for your particular organisation and event. In order to register a Charitable Trust, you will ideally require a Board of Trustees which should have six to eight members.

If your arts event requires complex planning and extensive funding it makes sense to invite board members to compensate for where there are any skill gaps, particularly for artistic, financial and legal areas. Typically the Board is a legal and oversight body which sets the strategic direction of the organisation.

As the founder of your art event, ensure that your Board has an effective leadership role in setting the culture, values and ethics for the organisation. The Board should monitor and review the organisation's financial and operational performance, including the performance of the Board and C.E.O or Executive Director). The Board is also responsible for identifying, monitoring, and mitigating any potential risks to the viability of the organisation and the financial security of its staff and assets. Overall, then, the Board should continuously ensure adequate internal controls are in place to guarantee the organisation's activities are conforming and in line with the expectations of the trust deed (memorandum of understanding / mission statement / manifesto!) of the organisation.

Things to keep in mind:

- If your arts organisation is applying for public funding, it is recommended that your Board members are independent of business, management, employment and/or artistic relationships with the organisation.
- In order to ensure that no conflicts of interest arise, Board members can only be ordinary members of the organisation and they should not have a material or pecuniary relationship with the organisation

that could potentially interfere with the functioning of a Board member's independent judgement. This is clearly to ensure that Board members do not, and are not seen to, unfairly influence or benefit from opportunities that may arise through their participation in decision making for the organisation. Failure to ensure Board member independence may lead to perceptions of conflict of interest in the broader community.

- A good way in which to allow organisational members and community stakeholders to have direct input into Board decisions is to establish sub committees to provide advice and inform Board discussion making.
- As your arts event grows and matures, it is an important aspect of healthy governance and management to ensure succession planning for Board and staff members. This includes identifying key competencies and appropriate length of service, particularly in relation to the chair person, deputy chair person, artistic director, chief financial officer and general manager, to ensure a suitable turnover of suitably experienced personnel and staff in order to keep the organisation dynamic and adherent to contemporary practices and standards.
- Aim for accessibility and diversity: Your arts organisation should try to maximise community access to and engagement with the arts of people from all backgrounds. Funding agencies look favourably upon organisations that deliver high quality arts activities and outcomes accessible to all members of the community, including monitoring progress towards access and inclusion for people with disability access needs. Yours arts event should take a proactive approach to making their facilities and/or events as accessible, welcoming and inclusive to people from all backgrounds.

DEFINING AN AUDIENCE

Finding and nurturing your audience is essential to the viable sustainability of your art event. However, we all know that no two people are the same, or share the same attitudes, opinions and motivations about the arts. It is important, then, to try and understand why and how different kinds of people engage with your arts organisation and your relationship with this audience. Research can be used as a tool to inform marketing and audience development plans for your arts organisation. It may also contain insights that you might find useful for fundraising and in the development of your art event.

Identifying your audience can be a difficult task but there are fairly common tools to help you segment and market yourself to specific segments. Ask yourself the following question: *What does your imagined art event address beyond the 'event'?* Your audiences may also be defined by the social, artistic and political goals of your arts organisation. As you develop your art event, you will naturally attract an audience that broadly believes in your values and the quality of your artistic offering. To help answer this question tick off the items on the list over the page.

Your Imagined Biennale (Art) Event...

(Tick where applicable)

- Addresses Social Inequalities
- Addresses Unemployment
- Addresses Lack of Infrastructure & Support
- Promotes Community Cohesion
- Promotes Education and Learning
- Promotes Human Rights
- Promotes Religion and Religious Activities
- Promotes Spirituality & Wellness Activities
- Promotes Volunteering
- Promotes the Environment and Animals
- Provides Social Relief and Care
- Regenerates Areas & Heritage Zones
- Supports Families
- Supports Children and Child Learning
- Supports Healthcare
- Supports Medical Research
- Supports International Aid and Overseas Development
- Supports LGBT Community
- Supports Social Indigenous & Tribal Communities
- Supports Languages
- Supports Sport and Recreational Activities
- Tackles Crime and Victimisation
- Tackles Discrimination
- Engages in the Arts or Heritage
- Engages with Older People
- Engages with People with Disabilities
- Engages with Young Offenders

(Other things not on the list? Please add...)

Arts Audiences: Insight Report – Arts Council of England

In its Arts Audiences: Insight Report, The Arts Council of England provide analysis for 13 distinct arts consumer segments among English adults. They define distinct arts consumer segments as follows:

Very Engaged Urban arts eclectic

Highly qualified, affluent, and in the early stages of their career, Urban arts eclectic are dynamic, and believe in seizing life's opportunities. They seek new experiences through travel and food, and have an interest in other cultures. They describe themselves as optimistic, creative and open-minded.

Traditional culture vultures

At a later stage in life and having attained a high standard of living, Traditional culture vultures have time to devote to their many leisure interests. Art and culture takes up the majority of their time, alongside travelling and spending time with family.

Somewhat Engaged Fun, fashion and friends

Fun, fashion and friends are developing their careers or just starting families. In their leisure time, they like to indulge in their interests of fashion and food. They are ambitious, optimistic and relish seeking out new experiences with friends and family.

Bedroom DJs

In their late teens or 20s, still living with their parents or having just flown the nest, Bedroom DJs are starting out in life. They are motivated and aspire to do well in their careers. With few commitments, they tend to live for the moment and spend impulsively even though they are financially constrained. Appearance

conscious and sociable, they spend much of their time and money on shopping, socialising and entertainment.

Mature explorers

Balanced and practical, Mature explorers keep up to date with current affairs and the news and seek to develop informed opinions, displaying their ethical concerns through their lifestyle choices. Neither faddish nor brand or image conscious, they are more practical in their spending habits and tend to opt for the 'tried and tested' approach.

They use art as a way to bring a new perspective to their lives.

Mid-life hobbyists

In their 30s, 40s and 50s, Mid-life hobbyists are family-focussed and spend most of their leisure time at home. They do not currently attend any arts events, mostly citing cost and lack of time as the main reasons. This group are most likely to respond to events and activities that are family friendly and informal and which don't require too much planning or advanced booking.

Retired arts and crafts

Home-loving and down to earth, Retired arts and crafts favour a regular routine and a slower pace of life. This group have a passion for nature and are keen gardeners.

They are happy with life, but may be limited in their ability to get out and about due to their age, disability or illness.

Dinner and a show

Dinner and show are a mainstream group consisting of a significant proportion of young and middle-aged people. With two-thirds employed and a third comfortably off, this group has disposable income to spend on leisure activities. Young

or young at heart they enjoy life — eating well, socialising and going on outings related to music.

Family and community focused

Typically in their 30s and 40s, Family and community focused have built a comfortable nest with their moderate financial means, and their priorities lie with their children, connecting with the local community and holding on to their cultural roots. Their interests lie squarely with their immediate surroundings and understanding people like themselves.

Not Engaged Time-poor dreamers

Early or mid-career, often juggling work and family commitments, Time-poor dreamers are busy, and short-term orientated, living in the moment. They engage with popular culture and the arts are not a priority for them.

Older and home-bound

In their senior years, the Older and home-bound group are generally content and have a practical outlook on life. They enjoy a slower pace of life and like spending a lot of their free time at home. Some of them report poor levels of health, which restricts their activities in general.

A quiet pint with the match

A quiet pint with the match are content with life and are not seeking change. They spend much of their leisure time at home, or you might find them having a drink with friends at the local pub.

Limited means, nothing fancy

Limited means, nothing fancy are information seekers who tend to spend their disposable income cautiously. Non-judgmental and dutiful, they value family

and friendships — for them leisure time is all about having a break and chilling out, within their limited means.

Key Findings

The analysis identified 13 distinct arts consumer segments among English adults. The percentage show the estimated proportion of English adults in each segment.

Highly Engaged	Urban arts eclectic 3%	Traditional culture vultures 4%
Some engagement	Fun, fashion and friends 16%	Bedroom DJs 2%
	Mature Explorers 11%	Mid-life hobbyists 4%
	Dinner and a show 20%	Retired arts and crafts %4
	Family and community focused 9%	
Not currently engaged	Time-poor dreamers 4%	Older and home-bound 11%
	A quiet pint with the match 9%	Limited means, nothing fancy 3%

GETTING THE WORD OUT!

The public is an examiner, but an absent-minded one.

— Walter Benjamin

Working with critics, journalists and agents

Art criticism has a very long history and has always maintained a high degree of relevance in public life. Art criticism and connoisseurship are uniquely suited for making sense of the world, also showing how it may never make sense, through interpreting and disseminating ideas in response to and gleaned from artists' works. Today the history of art can be said to be written through the exhibition, and in particular large-scale survey shows such as documenta and the Venice Biennale. Great art criticism survives and tells us about a particular art work and moment in history just as much great art does. Given that the Internet may have altered the economics of publishing and the mode of communication evolves from the written to the digital word, it is inescapable that what is communicated has changed as well.

Audiences today are supplied with a massive amount of analogue (print, vinyl, live) and digital art criticism. Arts audiences also consume fashion, lifestyle and general-interest publications that routinely cover the visual arts. In addition to this social media produces volumes of further media and information. It seems we are today living in an age of hyper-art criticism, no matter how little we are actually reading today. In fact, art criticism is increasingly image led, but it is not only images that are more abundant in today's art world. There is seemingly more of everything: more art, more museums, more galleries, more curators, more degree programmes, and more people equipped to readily produce and read art criticism. There is more writing about art and more venues for publishing, and its easier then ever to contact journalists and writers to cover your art event.

The Internet has also made it much easier for anyone to publish their own art criticism, and the sheer volume of online writing has resulted in greater global accessibility. The glut of information produced about art has also made it increasingly difficult to choose what to read. Importantly, then, seek out the important journalists and art critics writing for the important publications. In the end you must decide whether you prefer 1000 new friends on facebook or a review in Artforum or the Guardian, or both. With the unfolding disruption of the traditional media industry, including arts publishing, the decimation of business models based on lucrative print advertising revenues has yet to be replaced by anything comparably profitable on the World Wide Web. Contacting journalists directly and asking them to visit your art event has never been easier, don't be shy, if you think your art event deserves to be covered by a particular publication, arts writer or blogger, make sure you find a way to contact them. Invite them to your event!

Communications & Outreach

Turning a well-planned strategy into a reality through the press can be the best way to build a career — but this is done over months and years. — The KLF, *The Manual*, (1988).

Making your art event stand out and attracting your audience (if that is one of your aims) is an on-going challenge for any arts organisation. Your communications and outreach strategy is very important within the overall framework and function of your art event. Getting stakeholders involved and engaged, attracting the right collaborators and different age groups, whatever your vision and mission, you will need a water-tight communications plan in place.

In the age of social media and the Internet, it has gotten exponentially easier for arts organisations to market themselves and remain in contact with their audiences. A generation ago it would have been impossible to reach so many people, in so many places in such little time and with limited costs. Yet, despite the rise of communications across the planet, your communications strategy will

not be effective simply by ticking all the boxes. Rather you will have to craft the right message, tone and frequency of your 'comms' across all your channels of communication.

The specialised field of Arts PR or Comms has emerged in recent decades as the art world has globalised and professionalised and the interests of sponsors and patrons who want to position themselves through the arts. Arts PR agencies specialise in promoting and managing the reputations and interests of arts, cultural and charitable organisations. The best international agencies, consultants and teams can offer creative solutions and strategic communications advice, spanning all media formats worldwide (and of course at a hefty price!).

Look for synergies in your local area with existing media outlets and seek partnerships with media companies to reduce the costs of your marketing and promotions campaign. Whichever option you choose, whether its an in-house team or external agency, its important to remain consistent in your messaging and focus on your core objectives. With the proliferation of media platforms (analogue and digital) what you say, when and how all matters! If you have limited resources you can use free platforms such as social media and user-generated content in inventive ways, combining this with leaflets, posters and word of mouth campaigns. If your art event is supported by the local council and has public and private sponsors, you can include a comprehensive marketing and communications plan in your overall proposal.

Of course, as well as engaging in a professional approach to your comms strategy, don't forget to simply tell everyone you know what you are up to and why it is so great! Never miss an opportunity!

WORKING WITH ARTISTS AND CURATORS

It is going to be a construction job, fitting bits together. You will have to find the Frankenstein in you to make it work. Your magpie instincts must come to the fore. If you think this just sounds like a recipe for some horrific monster, be reassured by us, all [art] can only be the sum or part total of what has gone before.

— The KLF, *The Manual*, (1988).

Working with artists and curators can be one of the most rewarding aspects of creating and building your art event and they can bring inventive new ideas and energy, propelling your arts organisations forward as well as helping to engage and attract new audiences. (Of course, artists and curators can also provide you with some of the biggest headaches and dilemmas, but generally things all work out and always with worthwhile outcomes)

If you are an arts organisation, artists and creative practitioners will be at the core of your world. Artists and curators come in all shapes, sizes and temperaments. They also vary in terms of their attitudes, social-economic and political backgrounds. Artists and curators can also come with a myriad of skill sets from programming to weaving, accounting and carpentry. Artists and curators must always be viewed and treated uniquely as no two projects (or people) are ever the same, even if the same medium and type of work is being exhibited. Site-specific and unique specifications, instructions, texts and technical requirements will make each artist and curator and their projects a unique exercise.

Curators and arts administrators tend to be the primary interlocutors between the arts organisation and artist. Curators and arts administrators play a key role in delivering on the aims of the exhibition and activity and they should work

closely with artists at all times to ensure that the artist's vision is fulfilled as closely as possible, on time, within budget and adhering to all health and safety considerations.

In Daniel Buren's polemical 1972 essay 'Exhibition of an Exhibition', the conceptual artist took aim at the growing hegemony of the curator-author-organiser and questioned the role of the artist as 'interpreter' within this framework. However, if, as some have argued that we are living in the age of the curator and the curated, then it may help to begin by first thinking about the work of curators and their potential to think imaginatively about exhibition (and biennale) making and the potential for changing outlooks, the artworld, even perhaps the world through their endeavours and activities.

It is certainly the case that the role and primacy of the curator in the hierarchy of the artworld has been steadily ascending since the second half of the 20th century. Arguably it has reached its apex today: the curator holds a position and prominence equal to that of the artists, though their potential financial rewards remain a fraction of their equally successful artist counterparts. Of course, such economic factors are entangled in a complex web of externality and do not directly mirror the value 'produced' by either agent within any given art event itself. Nonetheless, as the role of the curator has evolved to the point of being a 'practice' in its own right, not unlike that of an 'artist practice', the lines between artist and curator are increasingly blurred. The rise of the artist-curator in recent years serves to both illustrate and further blur this distinction between the curator and the curated, requiring an urgent and critical exploration of this phenomena within biennale making but also within wider exhibition making trends today. And just as artists emphasize the role of the imaginative intellect in creating, critiquing, and constructing knowledge that is not only new but also has the capacity to transform human and aesthetic understanding, so art event (and biennale) making imbibes these instincts and approaches to transform a mere event beyond its constituent elements and into the realm of practice.

Thus, curators (and artist-curators) today occupy a rarefied and hybrid role that at once demands they must be aestheticians, diplomats, economists, fundraisers, critics, historians, writers, negotiators, audience interlocutors and developers, and event promoters. They must also have the skills to communicate with

a wide variety of agents and actors in the field, including politicians, corporate executives and sponsors and a wide range of artists and pedagogues. The workload of the curator clearly involves a range of personal skills including tenacity, tact, forbearance, flexibility, assertiveness and cunning, not to mention ego, patience and guile. Curators in this sense have been thrust from behind-the-scenes and into the limelight of the broader stage of cultural politics and arbitration, manoeuvring increasingly high stakes exhibition with a hands-on involvement in each aspect of the programme and event. In short they are often positioned as the heroes and heroines of the large-scale exhibition, there to either bask in the glory of collective achievement or to take singular responsibility for failures and shortcomings. The curator is, then, someone (or a group of individuals) worth taking seriously, supporting to the hilt, and also hiding behind when necessary!

WORKING WITH FRIENDS (AND PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW)

Ask anyone in the arts and creative industries if they've ever worked with friends, and they will likely say 'yes'. Ideas usually emerge when we are with friends or people that relax and inspire us and it makes sense that there is a willingness and compulsion to work with friends when trying to make things happen. Although there are many positive examples of working with friends, it can also be a minefield and could jeopardise the project (and your friendship) in the long term. Things, then, to keep in mind:

- **Alignment of core values:** Our friends normally share our values, if you're going to start an arts organisation with friends there must be alignment of values. Misalignment of values is a common reason why some friends can't make things work successfully.
- **Clearly defined roles and responsibilities:** It is important that each team member, including those that are friends and family, clearly understand what is expected of each person. One would never hire a complete stranger without clearly defining their roles and responsibilities, the same applies to the people you already know. This works both ways, clearly define what you expect of anyone you work with, and what they can expect of you and the organisation.
- **Exceptions to any rules:** All rules/restrictions/processes should always apply equally to all team members, including friends and family.
- **Financial arrangements:** The mixture of money and friendship is a potential trouble spot in any organisation. If you decide to work with friends and family, minimise financial friction and avoid issuing or accepting loans and promissory notes. Always try and pay all staff and contractors, including friends on time, in accordance with the agreed terms and conditions.

- Establish means of exiting from the arrangement: Every contract requires a termination clause. You should try and discuss ahead of time the possibility that one may want to terminate the arrangement. If that occurs, allow for and exit gracefully and graciously. Don't make it personal, and don't take it personally. Remember: friendships are more important than all the other stuff!

Appointing Lawyers & Accountants

For advice on working with lawyers and accountants, we are going to take a leaf directly out of The KLF's *Manual*, because (barring the gender bias encoded in the text) not much has changed in the intervening years and the same sound old logic and rationale applies to these essential professional services. Learn as much as you can before consulting with lawyers and accountants. Ask friends and family for advice, pop down to your local library or bookshop, or of course run relevant searches online.

You will need efficient and savvy lawyers and accountants as your event grows in size and scale. You could of course keep everything so simple and transparent that you devise a model that needs minimal services of these nature, it's up to you. But, when it comes to lawyers and accountants, let the aim be to have to spend as little time as possible with them while also ensuring to protect your legal and financial interests at all times!

From now on in you will be asked to sign various agreements, side letters and amendments. Don't sign any of them without your solicitor first reading it through and taking account of his advice. The trouble is, solicitors become addictive. He will be the one person in London who will always be on your side and see your point of view. Talking to him will give you a sense of warmth and comfort — just like heroin. But remember, his services will cost you at least £50 per hour, even if it's on the pay later scheme.

Things to watch out for with solicitors. Young ones are often eager and angry men. They were wimps at school and now with all their learning behind them, they are out to show the world what they knew all along. They will hint at the fortunes to be had. They will throw their hands up in horror at the undotted 'i's' and uncrossed 't's' in proposed contracts. 'Whoever drew up this contract hasn't got a clue!' is a favourite expression. This young, eager, go-getting type might seem to be the one you feel you can relate to in some way. Be warned. He is as likely to lead you into deep water or scare off

potential offers. Our advice would be to go with the slightly more mature solicitor. The wiser one. The one who knows how people's hearts and minds work, not just the sub clauses and bottom lines...

[.....]

The accountant should be your next appointment. Much of what has been said about solicitors applies to accountants.

Source: The KLF, *The Manual* (1988).

HOW TO PAY FOR IT ALL

Raising money may be one of the hardest things you will have to do whilst building your arts organisation and art event. If you have a large endowment or corpus to begin with, you can skip this section. If you are not part of the 0.1% then read on. Actually, even if you do have a pot of gold and deep resources at your disposal, some of this may be useful.

Fundraising for the arts has tended to be much less complex and sophisticated than the creative economy it supports and nurtures. Instead, the arts depend on four distinct types of funding:

- Grants – from public bodies like Government agencies, culture ministries and local councils.
- Earned income – from ticket sales, merchandise, food and beverage sales or retail.
- Philanthropy – including giving, trusts, foundations and corporate sponsorship.
- Investment – equity or loans, which are then repaid through the profits made on earned income.

The last of these – investment – is considered normal in all commercial enterprises, but is rarer in subsidised and non-profit arts organisations.

Crowdfunding models

Although the number of crowdfunding models is increasing, the four most prevalent types are:

- Donation: The organisation or individual creating a project doesn't

offer anything to those donating money. It works because people believe in causes, for instance, those championed by charities and their work.

- **Reward:** Those donating money for a project get something back in return, for instance, a chance to meet an artistic director, to be named in a programme or receive a ticket to a show (essentially pre-purchase). The benefit to the fundraiser is that they can offer rewards that cost them little, but are valued highly by backers.
- **Lending:** A company or individual borrows from a large number of small enders and repays them at a later date, usually — though not always — with interest.
- **Equity:** This model, where individuals receive a small share in a business or project in return for funding, is growing quickly in the UK through sites like Crowdcube and Seedrs. Funders do not usually receive any dividends but instead make a capital gain when at a later date someone buys their shares. Some arts organisations have implemented an equity model based on revenue — or profit-sharing.

Source: NESTA www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/the_new_art_of_finance_wv.pdf

Crowdfunding a Biennale?

The problem with crowdfunding an event like this is that there are a multitude of stakeholders all with their respective networks and takes on what being a biennale entails. This is confounded further if you're staying true to the bi-annual format, you need to address this question every twenty four months, lucky you!

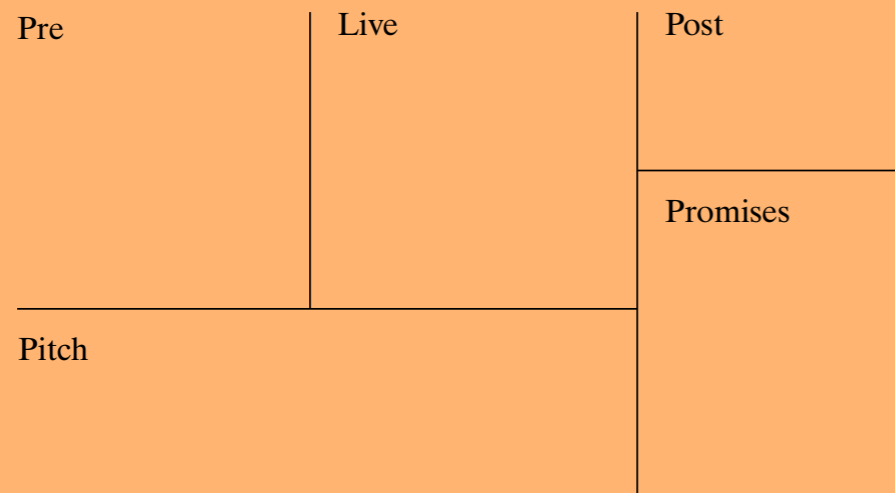
In a crowdfunding context this seems at odds with the very essence of campaigning. After all, campaigning in a crowdfunding context is not just about creating the campaign itself, it's about creating a vision for an intended audience. The reason why platforms allow updates from management and feedback from the crowd is so key assumptions about the campaign can be discussed and validated in the public arena. But, as a biennale, you have an issue, you're presenting something fixed that's in constant transition, a strategic plan with the flexibility to become a reality. This matters because the crowd rarely like things in flux. They like stability. So the question then becomes how do you become a stable biennale, or at the least, provide the illusion of being one?

Crowdfunding visions fail for a number of reasons (lack of trust, not respondent enough, lack of drive or simply not appealing enough), but not knowing your audience and who the biennale is for will surely add to the likelihood of failure. But equally, being too broad can lead to bland and unappealing campaigns that lack passion or drive. The hard truth is you need balance in your approach to crowdfunding such an event.

Balance is also needed in the language you use to address the audience. Being full of aesthetics and philosophy is fine, but that's going to exclude a large portion of the potential funders on the platform. A good biennale campaign will appeal to more than one section of the platforms community and the art tribes. As we find with the preparation of a solid biennale, so a crowdfunding campaign needs the same steely strategic approach.

Crowdfunding is fun and engaging when done right, it's also very demanding. But help is here in the form of the Crowdfunding Planning Page an open resource that will aid your development of the crowdfunding campaign.

It looks like this:



So let's look at the stages and the kinds of questions you need to ask in each.

Pre-campaign

Before the campaign gets launched you need to ensure all the budgets are set and up-to-date which includes the cost of producing the campaign (video, photographs, illustrations and anything else that might incur a cost) before you start planning in earnest. Auditing both platforms and other campaigns is also vital. Recording your findings will help you identify strengths and weaknesses in these other campaigns. While learning from the strengths of other campaigns is probably self-explanatory, seeing and learning from their weaknesses is probably less so. But lessons can always be learnt. Think about their presentation, their wording, their images, the season the campaign launches in and the length of time it ran for. All this can impact a campaign. Also in this early stage, start to think about the network you are able to access and how you are going to raise awareness of the campaign among these groups. Early contact will ensure awareness and you can plan to reinforce this engagement later in the campaign.

Pitch

Essentially what this section is asking you to do is think about the text you will use on the main campaign page and the story you will tell through the video. A storyboard for both is a great way to start this section. Start honing the scripts early and make sure you get feedback from as wide an audience as you can. The more critical the people that see the scripts — the better.

Live

What will you need to do when you go live? First thing is to think through the types of updates you will send out to the crowd and the kinds of questions you can predict the crowd asking you once you are out there seeking crowdconsent. One of the best pieces of advice is make sure that the team know their responsibilities and know who is to take ownership of the various aspects of the campaign. By doing this with clarity your team will better understand what is expected of them and what they are really being asked to do as you enter this critical phase. Networks also play an important part of this phase. The networks will generally need three nudges before they offer their consent. So plan at least three points of contact, three conversations, three nudges for each of the network groups you identified in the Pre-campaign stage.

Promises

Crowdfunders often make the mistake of thinking that the promises are reserved solely for the reward crowdfunding model. In fact any crowdfunding campaign is making a promise to the crowd and are integral to the trust that your project, as a future biennale, are imbuing in your campaign. For the reward crowdfunding model this becomes even more essential as the crowd are motivated to 'shop' for these promises. Therefore the main issues to consider are the delivery of the promise. Once the crowd have received their promise, will it be to the quality you have indicated in the campaign? With a biennale that might be back in two years seeking the granting of crowdconsent for this future event. It is essential that you keep the crowd sweet and go that extra distance to ensure that they are happy and content with the outcomes of their granting you their crowdconsent.

Post-campaign

Now you have the money to create the biennale of your dreams, what next? How will you continue to engage with these good folk of the crowdconsent ilk? How will you ensure that they deliver on the skills they may have promised and the help that they may have offered? It's tricky. But remember, you have a tribe of mixed creatives and observers to leverage and reform from investors, producers to consumers. You are now the tribes chief, and with this position comes much responsibility!

Overall, this resource has been proven effective in all five models of crowdfunding (donation, reward, equity, interest (debt) and mixed). It has been refined over many campaigns and offers you the best opportunity to set out your campaigns components and help you think about what you need to do and when. But what would you include in each section, how would this change for biennale creators across the globe. Does your culture impact your approach? How would the economics and politics of your particular situation help you shape the development and implementation of a crowdfunding campaign for a biennale? How would this strategy change for the second, third or fourth campaigns?

Chris Buckingham, founder of the specialist crowdfunding consultancy, minivation, and author of *Crowded Comments – Equity, Loans, Crowdfunding Intelligence, and Crowdfunding Readiness Assessment*.

Sponsorship & Acknowledgment of Funding

'Politics is the art of the possible', as the saying goes. Well, like in politics, fundraising for the arts is not simply about what's right or what's best. It's about what you can actually get done and delivered. Remember, there are no magic bullets and all money comes with strings attached, so be aware from whom and on what terms you accept donations and sponsorship funds.

Negotiating advantageous sponsorship contracts is an art in itself and progressive donors understand that less can be more in relation to splashing their logos and products at your art event and during your programmes. If you are raising funds from private sources, including companies, foundations and individuals, it is standard to appropriately acknowledge their funding and support on all your materials (hard copy or electronic) including websites, newsletters, media releases, advertisements, programmes, maps and guides, broadcast emails, invitations and any other promotional material.

Acknowledgment must be proportionate to the level of funding compared to other funding received and it is up to you on how to design your co-branding. Generally acknowledgements also need to be made in formal speeches, such as at launches and openings, and in any media articles, but its up to you to negotiate the terms of the engagement in discussion with your patron. The important thing is to ensure that the values and standards of the donor match the values and standards of your arts organisation.

Scale of Operation

The scale of your arts event will determine the best model for you to employ. Arts organisations operate at all scales from the one/two person operations sustained by small project grants and a turnover of less than £50k to major national institutions with incomes over £10m and substantial property assets and collections.

Arts organisations operate many different types of funding, operational and artistic models. The major drivers of difference beyond the external environment

and vision are art form, scale, the level of investment in physical assets and the identity of the organisation's primary audiences. Every organisation is started by an individual, or more commonly, a group of passionate and motivated individuals who want to make a difference. Business models are not created in the abstract. Successful organisational and administrative models generally evolve organically in response to the interplay of the vision and passion of their creators/leaders and the external environment within which you will operate.

While arts organisations of all scales are working to expand their income generation, larger organisations often have a greater potential for attracting a variety of income streams through:

- ticket sales
- sponsorships
- endowments
- core funding
- project funding
- catering & events
- retail
- sponsorship
- individual giving and friends' schemes
- artistic exploitation income
- royalties and charity auctions etc.

Each income stream has different resourcing needs in terms of people, space, assets and systems and each stream carries different levels of risk (and restrictions) and have different cash flow patterns. The organisational model you choose will be based on the type of person you are and where you are operating and with what level of resources available to you. Common traits in founders of arts organisations are the following:

- determination and commitment
- self-belief
- idea developers
- good verbal communication skills
- business and self-promotion skills

- technical ability
- good verbal communication skills
- organisation skills and the ability to meet deadlines
- research skills
- ability to work independently and with others
- stamina and a willingness to put in long hours.

There are a number of common organisational models for arts organisations, many of which can be scaled up or down depending on the nature and type of activity. See for example:

southeastmuseums.org/arts-business-models#.WqPWwZPFIWo

southeastmuseums.org/domains/southeastmuseums.org/local/media/images/medium/Alchemy_SEMDP_report_FINAL.pdf

Six key success criteria for assessing successful models

01. Alignment

- Model aligns with organisational purpose and goals
- Behaviours ensure model aligns across the organisation
- Holistic implementation
- Branding is aligned

02. Consistency

- Choices made in relation to the model complement and reinforce each other
- Coherent approach to implementing the model
- Stakeholders and audiences recognises a coherent offer

03. Robustness

- Model is sustainable over time
- Model creates a self-sustaining impact

04. Value created

- Stakeholders and audiences respond to the value proposition
- Value proposition is clearly understood and articulated internally
- Delivers to the bottom line — financial, cultural, social and environmental

05. Scalability

- Model has potential for growth

06. Invention

- Model is game changing
- Model can adapt to changing contexts
- Model has been adapted and tested over time

Innovation among arts organisations

The challenge for every non-profit is to find the sweet spot between exploring new opportunities and shoring up the best existing programmes, which means balancing discipline and freedom.

— Crutchfield & Grant, 2008.

Innovation is a multi-stage process whereby organisations transform ideas into new/improved products, service or processes, in order to advance, compete and differentiate themselves.

— Baregheh, Rowley, & Sambrook, 2009.

The arts organisations that have achieved continuous innovation and growth have a range of characteristics:

- Strong leadership
- A clear vision
- Appropriate values
- A dynamic board
- Strong teamwork
- Access to external resources
- Active inter-organisational networks

Your arts organisations, staff and board of trustees must have the ambition to reimagine and reinvent its models and processes when required. Some experts in the field refer to this as innovation; including experimentation, research and development, and/or evolution to achieve your funding goals. The funding model you employ will reflect the scale of your project and the environment you will be operating within.

Planning

Once you're figured out the model for your arts event and the organising body, you will need to make a Project Plan or Business Plan as it is known in the commercial sector. The Plan should be a concise and useful working document, covering a time period of a two to five year cycle.

Along with your Project/Business Plan, additional documents are critical for your arts organisation. These may include for example a detailed artistic programme for the coming year/s, governance statement, marketing plan, financial plan, risk assessment and other documents and materials may be included as annexures to the main Project/Business Plan. Experts recommend that your Project/Business Plan should be drafted as a high-level working document and should not exceed 25 pages. It is essential to ensure that the following key information is included,

- Purpose: What is the purpose of your arts event and why is it important?
- Executive Summary: An Executive Summary lays out your mission and purpose, providing a snap shot of your core objectives and mission.

- **Context:** What is the context of your art event and why is it important?
- **Goals:** What are the goals and benchmarks for your arts event, how do you hope to achieve these goals?
- **Key Performance Indicators:** What are the targets and benchmarks that you have set your self as an arts event and organisation? How will your organisation assess that KPI's have been met? These can include tangible (quantifiable) as well as intangible (unquantifiable) indicators.
- **Strategies:** What are the strategies and models that you will employ to achieve your aims, how will you execute on your chosen strategies and models?
- **Artistic Program overview:** Clearly define what your artistic programme will look like, the frequency of activities and events and why you think it is important.
- **Marketing Plan:** Your marketing plan should provide an indication of how you plan to communicate, promote and market your art event.
- **Financial Plan:** Your financial plan should provide detailed accounting and projected cash flow calculations for the execution of your arts event, over a medium term. All financial plans should indicate revenue sources as well as detailed analyses for current and future expenditure as well as fundraising strategies and development.
- **Management Plan:** to include Organisational Structure, Governance, Succession Plan, and Risk Management. Your management plan should provide detailed information about your chosen Organisational Structure, Governance standards and models, Succession Planning, Risk Management and exit planning/liquidation in the event of an act of God or other systemic and terminal shocks that lead to project failure. If you are planning your art event in an existing Government

or local body arts facility, you must also ensure that you are able to provide a comprehensive and strategic management plan for the facility and buildings. This planning will be integral to the project/business plan and must be included as an annexure to your overall presentation.

Financial Position

It is important to know that there is sound financial planning and positioning and organisers are recommended to ask for independent expert advice from a qualified accountant and legal counsel to ensure long-term viability and sustainability.

Ideally your arts organisation should build and maintain a reasonable cash reserve throughout the project, aiming for end-of-year surpluses. A simple benchmark for end-of-year surpluses of 10% to 20% of the annual gross income of the organisation. Although difficult to avoid in the beginning phases of a new project, repeated and unplanned deficits may reflect unsustainable organisational practices and may be an important factor when outside entities and individuals assess an application, and/or the viability of an arts organisation.

Having some cash reserves may assist your organisations in achieving long-term sustainability and establish new initiatives. The level of cash reserves will vary from organisation to organisation and should be relative to the scope of the organisation's activities, the risks associated with its events and activities, and the annual gross income and expenditure of the organisation. Arts organisations usually struggle to meet staff salary expenses and this can be detrimental to the morale of the team and other stakeholders. It is important for your arts organisation to have appropriate provisions for staff liabilities and other essential contingences.

Reporting Requirements

The Board of Trustees are expected to provide comprehensive, detailed and timely reporting through the annual acquittal and annual programme and budget process. Your organisation's auditor must attend the annual general

meeting to present and discuss the audited financial accounts. These reports provide information on the results the organisation achieves against its project/business plan and the future directions of the organisation in the context of the changing contexts and environment. It is recommended that for medium to large scale projects, statistical data should be collected as part of these reporting requirements and to help provide stakeholders with valuable information about the contribution that your arts event is making to the local community.

Conflicts Of Interest

Your Board should draft conflict of interest management policies and procedures so that any board or staff conflicts are declared. Conflict of interest policies and procedures should be submitted as part of your organisational project/business plan and reported against in grant acquittals. The Board should limit, to the maximum extent possible, actual or perceived conflicts of interests for board and staff members and their immediate family, particularly regarding any governance or programming conflicts.

The Board may create sub-committees, including external representatives and consultants, to assist with avoiding conflicts of interest. Similarly, artistic input may also be provided through an artistic and curatorial sub-committee rather than through Board members alone. In order to withstand internal and external scrutiny from a range of stakeholders and community members, you should always carefully consider any Board or staff member accessing the programmes or services offered by the arts organisation. This is particularly relevant where any Board and staff member receives, or is perceived to receive, any preferential treatment or receives a benefit not accessible to the wider community. Therefore within this context, Board members should ideally not be employed by the organisation.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Pistols might have been swearing on T.V. inciting a generation of kids to 'Get pissed! Destroy!' but if 'God Save The Queen' had not stuck rigidly to The Golden Rules* (*these will be explained later), The Pistols would never have seen the inside of the Top Ten.

— The KLF, *The Manual* (1988).

MAKING IT HAPPEN NEXT TIME (AND THE DIFFICULT SECOND BIENNALE)

The intention of any recurring event is of course firstly to establish itself, to successfully launch the first event. But, importantly, the measure of success is about having a viable sustained future. It is in securing of the difficult second event, and so to then become established, where the pay-off comes from all of the initial risk taking and efforts needed get a new event off the ground.

Sustaining any successful event is about building on some of the initial conditions that made the first event a success, while learning from mistakes and developing a strategic plan of action through some reflection on the initial goals, ethos and drivers that initiated everything in the first place. Understanding what success might be for the continued development of an event is dependent on understanding and ascertaining a useful definition of this. It might be understood as delivering on some key objectives, goals and other measurable, e.g. performance indicators (these might relate to data on audience figures from visitors, hits on websites, media mentions etc., that then become evidence of success and a reason to continue because of the level of engagement and interest, or utilised to get sponsorship or support based on a recognition of impact or reach).

Sustainability is also about building resilient frameworks and structures for effective development. It is normally a core, small dedicated team that sustains events beyond the actual schedule of an event, when staffing needs swell. Having the right mix of skills, knowledge, and expertise is key to successful planning, logistics, programming and the fund raising required to ensure events follow on from each other with some consistency and can grow. Having some consistent staff members means keeping hold of valuable knowledge, expertise and learning, another important sustainable need. This established team is one of the most valuable resources you will have as it will contain some of those

who have committed to the project through thick and thin from the start, as well as those who understand the specific conditions of a particular event and place, and who will then be best placed to adapt to change; weathering the issues, the politics and pressures that come with events management and production. While there is often enormous generosity and good will that is found in these groups, there is also the pressure to fund these key positions to ensure viability, professionalism and the survival of the project as a whole. The importance of having key consistent and familiar faces to an event as the main points of contact both locally and in communication with a network of support is to also communicate a sense of stability both internally and externally.

The need for local support/ers is important to develop roots in a place and connect with communities, local stakeholders and influencers as well as having high-profile champions and other established institutional support. The more embedded an event the more likely it will have the range of support it needs to be sustainable. Added to this is:

- the significance of the networks and networking of the event (allowing locals to connect with wider national and international networks);
- the value of your collaborative partnerships and projects (working together with other established partners to create new synergies or opportunities);
- the cooperation with local artists and initiatives (allowing for different exposure in new platforms with different audiences);
- educational programmes (supporting the development of creativity using formal and informal projects and programmes).

It can be seen that the very value of a biennale (and other such art events and exhibitions) is the duality of offer that makes it an attractive proposition to a place. The very format of experimentation and openness of a biennale offers reliable repetition as an event for artists and audiences, that can also be seen as the promise of giving unpredictable difference with each iteration, that keeps them as much vital as sustainable, i.e as events and as sites of criticality not

repetition. The biennale can be the opportunity to give back to the cultural life of the locality beyond the parameters of knowledge and experience that might only be found locally and which effectively opens up the experience of mobility and might bring a sense of global connectedness. Here the biennale's sustainability becomes inseparable from that of a more globalised and connected economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability in general.

Many biennales, festivals and events are reliant on public sector funding such as arts councils, local authorities (to a greater or lesser extent), as well as philanthropy, patronage and sponsorship, and are actively seeking funders to support their programme development. Many of the participating artists also bring their own grant funding for projects and in-kind support or gallery support and it is often the participation in recognised events that can support artists to attract this funding. This is challenging, and more often than not means needing to be reliant on freelancers and volunteers who want to support, be involved and get some lived experience. For example, volunteers are a significant part of the organisation of the Kochi Biennale and they vitalise the various arms of the Biennale, including production, programming, and documentation as well as connecting to other networks and audiences both local, national and beyond.

It is often the difficult issue of financial support, and of crucially making best use of available resources and funds understood in terms of sustainability, that can be the downfall or can impact on the ability of an event to survive the longer-term. There is clearly a need to understand how and where the money will come from to support a long-term future, but this also has to come without compromising ethical or creative ideals and there are many incidents where the artists or publics have criticised the funders and sponsors of arts events to their detriment. A mixed and distributed economy is needed as this helps reduce risk from reliance on any one funding stream. It is important to have people who are experienced in fund-raising and a good accountant to ensure sustainable practices, careful management of resources and the development of a good business plan. Typically, a very high percentage of cost base is tied up in direct costs of delivery, with very little in the way of overheads for year-round operation. To be viable, funding needs to sustain further funding bids, which means fostering patrons commercial activities and sponsorship (and showing them an overall vision, not just the needs of a single event).

IT IS NEVER JUST ABOUT THE ART...

In 2016, at one of the launch events for the Kochi Biennale, under the titled of 'The Art of Patronage', a panel consisted of sponsors, government ministers and philanthropists who had been directly involved in different aspects of supporting the inception and securing the future of the Biennale. The event recognised not only the importance of patronage in its many forms, but more essentially the careful balance needed of an evolving ecosystem for sustainability and that in turn this stability becomes a driving factor to securing the confidence for continued support. The Kochi Biennale has interestingly looked beyond the actual event and has made part of its wider mission to not only create a platform for contemporary art in India but also to provide a platform for social change, which has undoubtedly helped it in gaining local Governmental support and its wider patronage. In addition, the Kochi Biennale Foundation have ensured the Biennale's visibility through linked local events throughout the year as part of its mission to function as a catalyst for subjects, such as sustainability and urban development. This gives the Biennale a strong local purpose, important for continued deeper local support of the event, where longer-term local benefits can be seen.

Building goodwill and in-kind support are important resources and are often part of the nature of successful events in that people want to help support them. Photographer Dayanita Singh, for example, one of the prominent artist supporters of the Kochi Biennale, has commented in the press that the Biennale should provide a non-commercial space for artists, protecting artists beyond any absence of patronage, either from private parties or the government. 'I believe senior artists in the field should contribute towards the conduct of events like the Biennale,' she said. 'It is only the community of artists who can keep art festivals going in the event of patrons withdrawing support'

The field of economic development has, over the past few decades, shifted its focus from location and firm-based capital towards the development of human capital. The latter refers to the sets of skills, knowledge, and value contributed by a population. It has in turn become a recognized asset as firms and entrepreneurs choose where to locate and develop economic activities. Members of some sectors of today's workforce seek certain characteristics in the places they choose to live. Places with entertainment options, public interaction, lively streets, and recreational and educational amenities are preferred, along with arts and culture activities and amenities. Leaders in the field of planning and economic development utilise increasingly creative approaches to making places of any scale more satisfying to firms and their workforce, whilst increasing economic viability and competitiveness. However, very little research has been conducted to date in developing and emerging economies. Yet it is here that there has been an ever-greater drive to build and create cultural attractions, including perennial contemporary art exhibitions, museums and other types of 'cultural infrastructure'. Parallel to the proliferation of biennales in the West, Asia, Latin America, Africa and other regions, there has been marked increase in the creation and upgrading of analogous cultural projects. These include not only medium and large-scale museums, but also cultural districts, urban regeneration programmes, heritage restoration, gallery districts, art fairs, residency programmes, art hubs, innovation clusters and technology parks.

In both the developing world and the post-austerity developed world, investment in contemporary art is highly scrutinised, in part as a result of competing social and political priorities in economically challenging times. Generally, civic bodies and local, regional and national governments have used a range of qualitative and quantitative data that aims to justify such investments and policy moves by calibrating the contribution of arts investments to their host economies. Arts and culture have therefore been positioned to have a significant influence

on an array of policy goals, including economic development, rural development, urban revitalization, revenue generation, cultural tourism, accessibility and participation, diversity, education, and youth development.

A growing body of orthodox economic research from around the world attests to the fact that Arts and Culture is a tangible driver not only of the economy, but, as Michelle Reeves remarks, ‘sustained social and economic benefits for the whole of society’. Such a remark echoes the findings of The National Endowment for the Arts (USA). In partnership with the Brookings Institution, they conducted a symposium in 2012 titled ‘The Arts, New Growth Theory, and Economic Development’. One of the central themes of the symposium was the argument that ‘the arts are not an amenity or a sector that exists in isolation but that they are wholly integrated into local economies’. Several scholars, university departments, NGO’s and policymakers have been conducting research to advance public knowledge about the dynamic and evolving relationship between art and economic growth, particularly in Europe and the United States. Acting Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (USA), Joan Shigekawa, has noted that, ‘[w]e all know intuitively that the arts can help strengthen communities, but we need more solid economic data and analysis to back up those claims.’

The leading research in this field is being conducted primarily in the United States and Europe where competition for public and private funds has led to a more rigorous assessment of the social and economic impact the arts are having on a given locality. As Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa consider in *Creative Placemaking* (National Endowment for the Arts), these ideas have been combined with ‘creative place-making’ strategies that aim to ‘animate public and private spaces, rejuvenate heritage structures and streetscapes, improve local business viability and public safety, and [to bring] diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired by art’. However, despite a plethora of studies being commissioned and published in the last two decades, there currently seems to be no single method of parsing the complex factors at work, and further research along various lines is urgently required to advance knowledge about the place of the arts in economic, social and political development. Following close involvement with the Kochi Biennale, for example, it was possible to witness the true complexities of ‘staging’ art events on this scale. It is possible to account for a range of both tangible and intangible ‘outcomes’. Indeed there

aren't just ‘outcomes’ that we can assess (vis-à-vis investment for instance), there are — perhaps more importantly — also ‘inputs’. Increasingly, in order to measure the impact of the arts on a given society, we need to first understand its own specific conditions as much as we pay attention to wider, external measures. These inputs may include factors such as motivations, aspirations, limitations, place and governance. These are surely more powerful ‘measures’ than the fleeting experiences of events themselves and brief moments of self-reflection.

Overall, whether you have been engaged in real-life art projects, biennales and other such initiatives, or even just imaginary ones, the underlying need and urgency to biennial (as a verb) is born out of a desire and passion to engender deeper political and cultural needs that can make a difference to society. Biennales at their best have the potential to create new audiences, build foundations and allow for the sharing of information and knowledge production. Biennales introduce new and disparate regions to unaccustomed approaches to art, and conversely seasoned art-world centres to unfamiliar and under-represented places. Successful biennales lead to a growth in new arts infrastructure, including opportunities for arts education and spaces for debate and learning, positioning local cultures and traditions within a wider global context. Most importantly, to biennial is to have faith about and an impact upon the future, so enshrining a promise of what is to come, as built upon a collective civic effort, untethered by past rigidities.

Crucially, the specific ‘practice’ that emerges from and underpins perennial art events and exhibitions are site-specific and unique. And no doubt you will devise your own manual accordingly! Indeed, knowing ‘how to biennale’ is to explore the notion of, or rather to conduct your own biennale ‘practice’ as the lived, repetitive (and ongoing) engagement with a project that cannot easily be packaged for analysis or general comparison and consumption. The co-founder of the Kochi Biennale, Riyas Komu, in reflecting on the project he helped initiate, notes wryly that the creation of the Biennale itself was never really the issue. Rather it was what the event emanated or triggered. And this goes beyond art, beyond economics. The Biennale for Komu — as we hope you too will consider having worked through this Manual — is about building outwards and together. ‘We really have to build’, Komu remarks, ‘there needs to be a wider participation on deeper issues, because people are ready to come and speak about suffering,

rising inequality, art, conflicts, and issues that matter in our worlds. But at the same time we also need to stress the relevance of Biennale in a wider social-cultural and political context?

POSTSCRIPT

A couple of people have read through what we have written to check on the spelling and to see if we should be sticking in any more punctuation. They were disappointed with the way we ended it. We don't know what they expected, or what you expected. We certainly did not know what we expected. Maybe an attempt at metaphysical wit. "Expect nothing, accept everything"; something like that.

— The KLF, *The Manual* (1988).

and/or...

Clutch at straws. Build castles on clay. Let the quicksand tell you lies. Take the scenic route. Be there on time. Use two drummers if need be. Fill out forms. Seconds. Minutes. Hours. Days. Midweeks and predictions. Fall, spin, turn and dive. Sign cheques. Solicitor doing deals with "Hits" and "Now". Sleep at night. Black to white. Highest new entry. Good to bad. Fast forward. Top of the Pops. Re-read this book, whatever it takes. No, don't. You already know all there is to know. Faster. Faster. Faster. Give everything. Just give everything. This is the beautiful end.

— The KLF, *The Manual*, (1988).

APPENDIX:

**DIRECTORY
OF BIENNALES
IN 2017**

A

Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art (Australia)
 AFiRlperFOMA Biennial (Nigeria)
 Aichi Triennale (Japan)
 Americas Biennial (USA)
 Andorra Land Art (Andorra)
 Antarctic Biennale (Antarctica)
 Anyang Public Art Project (Korea)
 ARoS Triennial (Denmark)
 ARS (Finland)
 Art Wuzhen (China)
 Arts: Le Havre (France)
 Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (Australia)
 Asia Triennial Manchester (UK)
 Asian Art Biennale (Bangladesh)
 Asian Art Biennial (Taiwan)
 Ateliers de Rennes (France)
 Athens Biennial (Greece)
 Atlanta Biennial (USA)
 Auckland Triennial (New Zealand)

B

Bahia Biennale (Brazil)
 Baltic Triennial of International Art (Lithuania)
 Bamako Encounters, Biennale of African Photography (Mali)
 Bangkok Art Biennale
 Beaufort Triennial (Belgium)
 Beijing International Art Biennale (China)
 Benin Regard Biennale (Benin)
 Bergen Assembly (Norway)

Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (Germany)
 Bermuda Biennial (Bermuda)
 Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture (China)
 Bienal Centroamericana
 Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement (Switzerland)
 Biennial of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean (BJCEM)
 Blickachsen Sculpture Biennale (Germany)
 Borås International Sculpture Biennale (Sweden)
 Brighton Photo Biennial (UK)
 Bristol Biennial (UK)
 Bruges Triennial (Belgium)
 Bucharest Biennale (Romania)
 Busan Biennale (South Korea)

C

CAFAM Biennale (China)
 CAFKA – Contemporary Art Forum
 Kitchener and Area (Canada)
 California-Pacific Triennial (USA)
 Canakkale Biennial (Turkey)
 Carnegie International (UK)
 Carrara International Sculpture Biennale (Italy)
 Cartagena de Indias Biennial (Colombia)
 Central American Isthmus Biennial (BAVIC)
 Cerveira Bienal (Portugal)
 Changwon Sculpture Biennale (South Korea)
 Chengdu Biennale (China)

Chicago Architecture Biennial (USA)
 Colombo Art Biennale (Sri Lanka)
 Contemporary Art Festival Sesc_Videobrasil (Brazil)
 Contour. Biennial of Moving Image (Belgium)
 Cuenca International Biennial (Ecuador)
 Curitiba Bienal (Brazil)

D

D-0 ARK Biennial (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
 Dak'Art: African Contemporary Art Biennale (Senegal)
 Dallas Biennial (USA)
 Desert X (USA)
 documenta (Germany)
 Dojima River Biennale (Japan)
 Dublin Contemporary (Ireland)

E

East Africa Art Biennale (East Africa)
 Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial (Japan)
 Emergency Biennale (Chechnya)
 End of the World Biennial (Argentina)
 EVA International (Ireland)

F

Fellbach Triennial of Small-scale Sculpture (Germany)
 Florence Biennale (Italy)
 Folkestone Triennial (UK)
 FRONT International (USA)
 Frontiers Biennial (Mexico)
 Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale (Japan)

G

Garage Triennial (Russia)
 Ghetto Biennale (Haiti)
 Glasgow International (Scotland)
 Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art (Sweden)
 Greater New York (USA)
 Guangzhou Triennial (China)
 Gwangju Biennale (South Korea)

H

Harlem Biennale (USA)
 Havana Biennial (Cuba)
 Helsinki Photography Biennial (Finland)
 Honolulu Biennial (USA)

I

IDEAS CITY Festival (USA)
 Incheon Women Artists' Biennale (South Korea)
 International Print Biennale (UK)
 Istanbul Biennial (Turkey)

J

Jakarta Biennale (Indonesia)
 Jamaica Biennial (Jamaica)
 Jerusalem Biennale (Israel)
 Jogja Biennale (Indonesia)

K

Kampala Art Biennale (Uganda)

Karachi Biennale (Pakistan)
Kathmandu Triennale (Nepal)
Kaunas Biennial (Lithuania)
Kenpoku Art (Japan)
KLA ART (Uganda)
KOBE Biennale (Japan)
Kochi-Muziris Biennale (India)
KölnSkulptur (Germany)
Kuandu Biennale (Taiwan)
Kyiv Biennale (Ukraine)

L

Lagos Biennial (Nigeria)
Lahore Biennale (Pakistan)
LAM 360° (Mongolia)
Lisbon Architecture Triennale (Portugal)
Liverpool Biennial (UK)
Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts (Slovenia)
Lofoten International Art Festival LIAF (Norway)
Luanda Triennale (Angola)
Lubumbashi Biennale (Congo)
Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art (France)

M

Made in L.A. (USA)
Manif d'art – The Quebec City Biennial (Canada)
Manifesta, European Biennial of Contemporary Art (Europe)
Mardin Biennial (Turkey)
Marrakech Biennale (Morocco)
MDE Medellin Internation Art Encounter (Colombia)

Mediations Biennale (Poland)
Meeting Points (Lebanon)
Mercosul Biennial (Brazil)
Milan Triennial / La Triennale di Milano
MKH Biennale (Germany)
Momentum (Norway)
Mongolia 360° Land Art Biennial (Mongolia)
Montevideo Bienal (Uruguay)
Montréal Biennale (Canada)
Moscow Biennale (Russia)
Moscow International Biennale for Young Art (Russia)
Mural and Public Art Biennial (Colombia)

N

New Museum Triennial (USA)
Nicaragua Biennial (Nicaragua)

O

Oberschwaben Triennale (Germany)
Odessa Biennale (Ukraine)
OFF Biennale Cairo (Egypt)
Okayama Art Summit (Japan)
Oku-Noto Triennale (Japan)
Online Biennale

OpenART (Sweden)
Oran Biennale (Algeria)

P

Paris Biennale (France)
People's Biennial (USA)
Performa (USA)
Periferic (Romania)

Pittsburgh Biennial (USA)
Pontevedra Art Biennial (Spain)
Prague Biennale (Czech Republic)
Prospect New Orleans (USA)
Public Art Melbourne Lab (Australia)
Pune Biennale (India)

Q

Qalandiya International (Palestine)

R

Rauma Biennale Balticum (Finland)
RIBOCA – Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art (Latvia)
Riwaq Biennale (Palestine)
Ruhrtriennale (Germany)

S

Saigon Open City (Vietnam)
San Juan Poly/Graphic Triennial (Puerto Rico)
São Paulo Biennial (Brazil)
São Tome e Príncipe Biennial (São Tome e Príncipe)
Sapporo International Art Festival (Japan)
SCAPE Public Art (New Zealand)
Sculpture Quadrennial Riga (Latvia)
SeMa Biennale – Mediacity Seoul (South Korea)
Setouchi Triennale (Japan)
Shanghai Biennale (China)
Sharjah Biennial (United Arab Emirates)
Shenzhen Sculpture Biennale (China)
SIART (Bolivia)

Singapore Biennale (Singapore)
Sinopale (Turkey)
Site Santa Fe International Biennial (USA)
Skulptur Projekte Münster (Germany)
Socle du Monde Biennale (Denmark)
Sonsbeek (Netherlands)
SUD, Salon Urbain de Douala (Cameroon)
SURVIVAL (Poland)
Survival Kit (Latvia)
Suzhou Documents (China)
Sydney Biennial (Australia)

T

Taipei Biennial (Taiwan)
Taiwan Biennial (Taiwan)
Tallinn Print Triennial (Estonia)
TarraWarra Biennial (Australia)
Tate Triennial (UK)
Tatton Park Biennial (UK)
Tbilisi Triennial (Georgia)
The London Open (UK)
Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art (Greece)
Tirana Biennial (Albania)
Triennale (France)
Triennale–India (India)
TRIO Biennial (Brasil)
Turin Triennial (Italy)
Turku Biennial (Finland)

U

U-Turn Quadrennial for Contemporary Art (Denmark)
UNASUR Contemporary Art International

Biennial (Argentina)
Ural Industrial Biennial (Russia)

V

Vancouver Biennale (Canada)
Venice Architecture Biennale (Italy)
Venice Biennale (Italy)
Videonale Festival for Contemporary Video
Art (Germany)
Vienna Biennale (A)
Vienna Biennale (Austria)
VIVA Excon (Philippines)

W

Western China International Art Biennale
(China)
Whitney Biennial (USA)
Whitstable Biennale (UK)
WRO Media Art Biennale (Poland)

Y

Yinchuan Biennale (China)
Yokohama International Triennial of
Contemporary Art (Japan)
Young Artists Biennial (Romania)

Z

ZERO1 Biennial (USA)

Source: The Biennial Foundation Website
accessed June 2017
www.labiennale.org/en/biennale/organization

GUARANTEE – HOW TO OBTAIN IT

WE GUARANTEE THAT WE WILL REFUND THE COMPLETE PRICE OF THIS MANUAL IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ACHIEVE A NUMBER ONE SINGLE IN THE OFFICIAL (GALLUP) U.K. CHARTS WITHIN THREE MONTHS OF THE PURCHASE OF THIS MANUAL AND ON CONDITION THAT YOU HAVE FULFILLED OUR INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LETTER. TO RECEIVE THIS GUARANTEE PLEASE WRITE TO KLF PUBLICATIONS, BOX 283, HP21 7HG, U.K. WITH YOUR NAME, ADDRESS AND A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR PURCHASE RECEIPT AND AN S.A.E. YOU WILL RECEIVE YOUR GUARANTEE WITHIN 28 DAYS.

– The KLF, The Manual (1988)

Be ready to ride the rollercoaster of making a biennale (and other such recurring art events, festivals, and happenings*). Be ready to make things happen, even if against the odds. *How to Biennale! The Manual* provides you with everything you need to know (except for the bits we miss out or fail to predict). It is the manual of manuals, offering both useful, practical information and deeper, philosophical ponderings on what it means to make art events and exhibitions in the age of institutional hybridity and globalisation. The book covers where to start in making art eventful (so getting over the dilemma of whether or not we need yet another event, and about being international, yet staying local). It considers what it means to have a vision (how to be distinctive and where to put the biennale). It gives all the necessary practical advice (choosing a model, building a team, defining an audience, getting the word out, working with artists and curators, working with friends and people you don't know, and, of course, how to pay for it all!) And, finally, it asks that fateful question: What Happens Next?

* delete as appropriate.