

## Identifying Audiences

and their national characteristics

### *A brief bio*

- Laurie Uprichard is currently Associate Producer at Quatenaire, an international creative producer and tour managing agency based in Paris. From 2007-2011, I was Director of the Dublin Dance Festival, an annual festival of contemporary dance. From 1992-2007, I was the Executive Director of Danspace Project, a dance presenting organization based in St. Mark's Church in New York's East Village. Prior to that, I worked with Urban Bush Women, at Dance Theater Workshop and at the New York State Council on the Arts. I have an MBA with a concentration in marketing. I'm an inveterate traveler and deeply curious about culture.

### *Overview*

- Who is your audience? Who do you want to be your audience? Are they the same? What do they look like? Do they look like you? Are they your friends?
- Where do you find your audience? How do you communicate with them? What are the words you use when you talk about dance?
- What means of communication are they paying attention to? Do they even read their snail mail/post? Do they delete mass e-mails? What about texts? Facebook and/or Twitter? Who has the time to even manage all this?
- Is there a dance audience that crosses borders? Are there generic answers to these questions that you can find on the internet and put into practice? Or do issues of individual national identities and cultures extend to audience development and engagement?

### *Who Are They?*

- A UK study found that existing customer data bases are reliable sources of statistical information on audiences.
- To survey or not to survey; baseline data
- How do you describe your audience?
  - Demographics (Age, Gender, Income)
  - Psychographics (Values, Interests, Lifestyles)
  - Culture Segments (Enrichment, Entertainment, Release, etc.)

### *Dance Audiences*

- \* Marketing managers thought dance audiences were young, attended dance frequently, were loyal to particular companies, and were willing to travel more than 30 minutes to see a performance.
- \* NONE OF THE ABOVE IS TRUE.
- \* Dance audiences are not interested in dance per se. 4 out of 5 ticket buyers attend less than once/year.

### *Where do you find the audience?*

- Existing customer data bases are the best sources of new audiences for dance
- Are you capturing your audience data?
  - Full names
  - Phone numbers
  - E-mail addresses
  - What about walk-up buyers?

### *Communicating with Audiences*

- Communicating with your current audience is most cost-effective and efficient
- Season brochures have been found to be the most important methods of communication
- Websites and electronic newsletters are gaining importance but require time and attention
- Texting is a common form of communication in certain countries, e.g. Indonesia, where personal computers and internet connections are less common

### *Websites – a few hints*

- Use key words that an audience member would use
- Home page should have a 25-word description of your organization/project
- Use metatags that the audience would use ([www.ranks.nl](http://www.ranks.nl))
- Most information should be “above the fold”
- Don’t use flash on your home page
- Increase inbound links ([www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com) : link(your site)

### *E-lists*

- Signing up should be easy to find and quick to do
- Mailings must be relevant to the audience’s interest
- Check via stats/clics if messages are opened and read
- Messages must be relevant and attractive
- What do say when you describe dance? What do you think the audience wants to hear?

### *A few resources*

- Are there generic answers to these questions that you can find on the internet and put into practice?

- A few resources

Australia: Audience Research Made Easy

[http://www.arts.vic.gov.au/Research\\_and\\_Resources/Resources/Audience\\_Research\\_Made\\_Easy](http://www.arts.vic.gov.au/Research_and_Resources/Resources/Audience_Research_Made_Easy)

US: Rand Study

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/RB2504/index1.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB2504/index1.html)

EU: Creative Europe

[http://ec.europa.eu/culture/events/documents/audience-delpm-report\\_eenc.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/events/documents/audience-delpm-report_eenc.pdf)

UK: Culture Segments

<http://www.lateralthinkers.com/culturesegments.html>

### *The philosophical dimension*

- Supply and Demand; artists vs audiences
- Who is responsible for building demand – the marketplace, the funding agencies, the programmers?
- What is the role of the artist in building demand?
- How does an artist offer value within the world of competing demands on time and attention?
- Should the audience be at the center of an arts organization’s mission, e.g., is the mission “to produce great plays” or “to connect audiences to great plays”?