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Performing the Festival - a study of the Edinburgh International Festival in the Twenty-First Century

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

The broad objective of this thesis is to examine the changing role of international arts festivals in the twenty-first century. The context for the investigation is a change in the global landscape for festivals. Critics have drawn attention to the burgeoning of festivals since World War Two (Focroulle 2009, Klaic 2009, Segal 2009) and De Greef, Secretary General to the European Festivals Association (EFA) from 2004-2008, refers to it as a ‘phenomenon’ that ‘the concept of festival has boomed especially in Europe, but also elsewhere’ (De Greef 2008:3). The city of Edinburgh is itself an illustration of this phenomenon since it has successfully branded itself as The Festival City and, during the period of study, twelve major international festivals were at the centre of its cultural policy and contributing substantially to its economy.

The research has been facilitated by a Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) funded by the AHRC and supported by the Edinburgh International Festival (EIF). This collaboration has enabled unique research access to a particularly appropriate festival since the EIF is known worldwide as Scotland’s most iconic and high profile arts event and is at the heart of Edinburgh’s Festival City cultural strategy. Established in 1947, it continues to be regarded, and to regard itself, as *the* leading international arts festival¹ with a clear identity and an established tradition of programming music, opera, theatre and dance of the very highest quality and promoting historic first performances in the UK. It is also a prototype which has served as a model for many other international arts festivals set up in the postwar years and continues to welcome artists, administrators and politicians from other countries to study how it works.

The thesis explores the reasons for the proliferation of festivals and the implications of this for the festivals themselves, for stakeholders and for policy makers. Responses to the current situation differ: Tom Stromberg, a director and producer of festivals, suggests that ‘we should think of abolishing them for a while,

¹ To be *the* international arts festival is part of the ‘key vision’ developed for the EIF by branding consultancy Jane Wentworth Associates in 2008.

they have simply become too successful' (Stromberg 2008:196) while the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) commissioned AEA Consulting to make recommendations on how the Edinburgh festivals could continue to compete and capitalize on available opportunities. The resulting report, *Thundering Hooves: Maintaining the Global Competitive Edge of Edinburgh's Festivals*, published in 2006 is a key resource for the research, focusing on eleven international festivals operating in Edinburgh, providing an analysis of the global landscape for international festivals and offering case studies of the funding structures and operations of eight competitor festivals. Its recommendations have become an important element in CEC's cultural policy. It linked the new popularity of festivals to an expansion of urban development:

From the early 1980s there has been a process that can be characterised as 'festivalisation' which has been linked to the economic restructuring of cities, inter-city competitiveness and the drive to develop cities as large-scale platforms for the creation and consumption of cultural experience. (AEA 2006:16)

This increase of public investment in festivals created a more competitive landscape and encouraged a politicization of support to cultural activities. The thesis demonstrates that, against this background, a range of inter-related creative, cultural, economic and political developments has contributed to a significant transformation in the expectations that bear upon international arts festivals. It establishes that festivals may now be harnessed for delivery of a range of policy agendas and explores how the functions that international arts festivals need to perform in order to survive and achieve success are changing in this new environment. The thesis is about the extent to which new demands are creating new roles in addition to the cultural remit of international arts festivals.

In constructing a case study of the EIF, it would have been an attractive proposition to examine the artistic programming of the Festival. However, I concluded that the EIF's artistic mission has remained constant since it was established. It is committed to producing the highest quality international programming and, while the concept of 'international' has deepened with new

directorial input, senior management at the EIF were confident that the artistic programme remains at the heart of the EIF enterprise and it is under constant review by critics and peers. I therefore decided to use this opportunity to focus on areas where recent change was most apparent within the EIF and to explore the new roles which have emerged as a result of changes in cultural policy on festivals and how they have affected the strategies and working practices of festivals, seeing this as a story which had not yet been told.

The specific questions the research sets out to investigate are therefore designed to explore areas where change is most strongly evident and to uncover indications of organisational changes in response to new agendas. They can be summarized as:

- How have the activities of international arts festivals in relation to marketing, branding and communications changed in recent years on account of growing international competition?
- To what extent have levels of reliance on (building and use of) partnerships as a source of advantage changed?
- How has the relationship between festivals and Governments changed? To what extent are festivals required to play new roles in delivering political agendas?

The focus of the thesis is on the changing role of festivals and it is certainly the case that the term ‘festival’ encompasses a broad range of activities. Historical literature indicates that they were originally associated with communal spiritual or transcendent experiences, which often included sanctioned episodes of subverting authority and celebrating excess, which can be seen today in carnivalesque festivities like *Mardi Gras* (Gold 2005). They are also closely associated with concepts relating to culture and with rituals which assert identity and celebrate cultural values (Friedrich 2000; Autissier 2009). For artists they offer a platform for performance, for collaboration and for a particular relationship with their audiences ‘drawing the audience into an intense experience which encourages it to abandon normal patterns of behaviour in order to see and understand their world afresh’ (Fenton 2008:179). Festivals have also been widely used by governments as platforms for displays of power and international profiling. Recent examples of

this are the Festival of Britain in 1951 and regular festivities such as the European Capitals/Cities of Culture programmes and the Olympic Games which offer major opportunities for countries and cities to benefit from tourism, regeneration projects and a range of economic advantages. The thesis examines how a complex cluster of evolving meanings may contribute to the expectation that festivals can deliver a range of sometimes contradictory agendas today.

The derivative term 'festivalisation' refers to the more recent role of festivals in fostering city development as discussed in the above quote from AEA Consulting (2006) and is also used in a pejorative sense to indicate an over crowded festival landscape by practitioners like Tom Stromberg (2008). However, a recent project, *Euro-festival* (2009), investigating festivals from a sociological point of view, uses it in a more positive way where it is associated with re-generation and a popularization of the consumption of culture, bringing diversity, internationalism, sociability and entrepreneurial qualities to cultural institutions like museums (Giorgi in Segal 2010:8). The thesis traces the trajectory of festivals from their origins in ancient religious rituals to their status today as multi-faceted tools of public policy and economic drivers which are expected to deliver a growing range of benefits.

The central focus of the research project is on the influence of differing and evolving interpretations of what the role of festivals ought to be and on the way festivals operate and perform in the twenty-first century. The potential for disputed understandings is clearly evident not just in theory but in practice. As this research started out there were signs of a potential tension at the heart of the festival concept because of its complex cultural meanings for artists and practitioners which include subversion and transcendence, and the more instrumental agendas that have accumulated over the postwar years. For influential stakeholders the EIF is important economically:

We need to think about what Scotland needs now and also about the kinds of organisations and enterprises that will create strong foundations for the future and enable growth which will come after difficult times of austerity. The Edinburgh Festivals are an increasingly powerful cultural and

economic force. We need to invest in them and capitalize on them, now more than ever. (Sir Andrew Cubie, Festivals Forum member 2011)

For artists the EIF has other roles which may not easily be capitalized upon:

The EIF is fundamentally anti establishment, anti government, in the sense that the nature of all festivals is anti- establishment. (Interview with Jonathan Mills, 3 February 2010)

Part of the purpose of the thesis is to build new knowledge about how differing and expanding agendas of expectation are being negotiated by festival organisations. The following chapter discusses a range of earlier literature which further defines the key terms introduced here and indicates the significance of changing meanings over time in order to contextualize the key ideas and themes explored in the study. It uses relevant critical literature to indicate how complex ideas about festival have developed, and how they have shaped the viewpoints of artists, audiences, stakeholders and policy makers. Chapter Two indicates current critical and policy debates on festivals which have informed the broad themes of investigation and to which the thesis proposes to contribute. The aim is to develop further the argument that the role of festivals is changing by establishing critical viewpoints on how and why the changes have come about and how they have affected cultural policy making for festivals.

‘Festival’ is a key term used in the thesis to unpack the current situation, where meanings have evolved over time, and to build the argument that roles have changed. ‘Culture’ is also a key term. The relationship between culture and society is part of the research discussion and the way that the meanings attached to culture have changed during the postwar period is important for festivals. What Williams refers to as ‘the deeper cultural revolution’ (Williams 1961:273) during these years affected government motives for supporting culture and the criteria used to assess it. The thesis is also concerned with cultural policy, a government policy area of growing importance where ideas about culture ‘affect contemporary notions of governance’ and government policy affects how culture is administered and regulated (Scullion & Garcia 2005:117) and how culture is thought about.

The question of Scottish culture is also an important strand in any discussion of the EIF. Debate about what Scottish culture is, or could be, has engaged Scottish artists and critics since the Act of Union in 1707 and it emerged as an issue for the EIF when artists became aware that the first festival programme in 1947 featured no contemporary Scottish work. The question of whether the EIF should promote Scottish culture continues to be active (Bartie 2006, 2009) as does the question of how the EIF has contributed to Scottish cultural life (Harvie 2003) and both are explored in the research.

‘Partnership’ is also a key term as an important objective of this research is to investigate the ongoing importance of partnerships for festival organisations. In the commercial world forging and maintaining partnerships and collaborations are increasingly recognized as a strategy to obtain competitive advantage (Mohr & Speckman 1994) and which requires particular management skills and new forms of managerial investment from companies. The term ‘cultural partnership’ became popular as local governments in the 1980s introduced the idea as part of a strategy to pursue urban development objectives in partnership with arts organisations. Within such partnerships differing parties will have differing strategic goals (Lawless 1996, Carter 2000), and a key theme explored in the thesis is the increasing emphasis that festival organisations in a competitive market are now placing on a range of partnerships and what new roles they need to play in order to make this strategy a success. In the context of this study the term ‘partnership’ is used to refer to the various forms of strategic collaborations between festival organisations and funders, sponsors, international governments and rival festivals.

There is also a growing critical and policy interest in what has been termed ‘cultural diplomacy’ (Bound et al 2006) a key term indicating the use of ‘soft power’ defined as ‘the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments’ (Nye 2004:x). This is relevant to the discussion of the contemporary environment for festivals which appear to be well suited to playing such a role on behalf of government, and the research explores how the EIF is approaching the potential of this in Edinburgh. The arts constituency expected that the Scottish National Party (SNP), which was the government in power during the period of study, would want to focus on Scottish culture and identity and might be

particularly interested in the idea of using Scottish cultural organisations to further its interests. The research examines how the EIF used this opportunity to forge new kinds of relationships with government.

A key concern in this thesis is to understand the implications of the rapid growth in public and private investment in festivals which has produced global competition resulting in more commercialised and politicized expectations surrounding festivals. How far has this re-shaped cultural policy making in Scotland, the UK and internationally? The key issue explored is how new expectations and agendas have changed the roles which international arts festivals are seeking to pursue.

In order to further the aims of the research project, and to maximize the opportunity offered by the collaborative relationship with the EIF, the thesis has been designed around a case study approach. This was considered appropriate since there is a growing recognition of the validity of the use of case studies to observe the impact of policy on organisations as ‘they are able to illuminate the effects of implementations on everyday activities’ (Bryman 1995:172). To contextualise the case study, Chapter Three uses archival and historical material (Miller 1996) to provide a brief history of the EIF and to show how the organisation was originally imagined and structured, charting its European and class roots and illustrating how key points in its development are linked with social and political change in the UK and Scotland. The arguments used to bring together very different partners with different agendas are examined. How did a European intellectual and opera lover persuade the city fathers that Presbyterian Edinburgh could and should act as hostess to an international arts festival featuring opera and the high arts, despite post-war difficulties of rationing and restricted travel? Chapter Three considers the operational manoeuvres demanded of and deployed by individual Festival Directors in response to the cultural policy issues which they faced; particularly the challenges of managing an international arts festival based within the very local world of Edinburgh from a base in London. While much of this material describes the specificities of the EIF story, many of the themes are relevant to international arts festivals more generally, for example, the theme of how festivals connect with the evolution of ideas about nationhood and national identity. These ideas have acquired extra resonance since devolution stimulated

wider debate, not only in Scotland (Paterson et al 2001; Murkens, Jones & Keating 2002), but in the UK and Europe and are implicit in discussions of culture, cultural policy and cultural diplomacy which are referred to in the research.

The case study was conducted from January 2009 to June 2011 and the approach was chosen to allow observation and critical reflection to contribute to the theoretical goals of the research. The study focuses on key aspects of the EIF's activity in order to uncover to what extent the more pressurized environment described above has re-shaped the EIF's role and sense of purpose. It investigates how, in the global context of recent years, adjustments to key activities and strategies at the EIF have been implemented in order to ensure the survival and success of the organisation. The aim is to contribute new knowledge to current critical debate on international arts festivals which will be relevant to academics in the field of cultural policy, arts management and related sectors and also to policy makers, both in government and arts funding agencies; to stakeholders, whether public funders or private sponsors; to cultural managers, organisers of arts festivals and to other scholars working in these areas.

To facilitate the case study the EIF provided a desk at the festival office and resources which included the opportunity to observe the festival in action, to interview staff, to study archival and internal documents and to attend festival and other events during the research period. The EIF is examined during a time of crucial change and the analysis of transformations indicates ways in which the organisation is responding to political, cultural and economic pressures that are generally affecting all international festivals and also to the specific political and cultural cross-currents which are integral to the distinctive context of post-devolution Scotland. The collaborative relationship also meant that, in addition to facilitating the case study, the Managing Director of the EIF, Joanna Baker, acted as a non-academic supervisor for the three years of the research project providing invaluable insights from the centre of the organisation and offering unique access to information.

The investigation focuses on three aspects of the organisation's activity where change appears considerable and significant and it uses the questions, summarized

above, to direct investigation into the EIF's development of strategies in three areas which form the central chapters of the thesis. Chapter Five analyses the EIF's approach to maintaining its lead in an environment which has produced competition for artists, audiences and resources. It examines what strategies have been employed to maintain its competitive edge by focusing on the organisation's approach to marketing and corporate communications, including the use of technology. Chapter Six focuses on partnerships which, in the context of festivals, come in many differing forms. Drawing on findings based on the EIF's experience, it addresses the question of whether, against a background of much increased competition amongst international arts festivals in the twenty-first century, there is greater emphasis now than in the past on forging and utilising partnerships and, if so, what the implications may be. In Chapter Seven, a key issue under investigation is the changing inter-relations between festivals and government. In a more politicized, pressurized and competitive environment, festivals may be required to play new roles in delivering political agendas. The chapter presents and analyses findings in relation to how, in the context of major shifts affecting the political landscape in Scotland in the twenty-first century, the EIF's role and sense of purpose has been influenced and re-shaped by newly emerging political and cultural expectations.

The next chapter discusses a range of earlier literature which further defines the key terms introduced here and indicates the significance of evolving meanings over time in order to bring out the key ideas and elucidate the argument explored in the study. It uses relevant critical literature to indicate how the complex ideas about festival and culture alluded to above have developed and how they have shaped the viewpoints of artists, audiences, stakeholders and policy makers. The chapter indicates current critical and policy debates which have informed the broad themes of investigation into festivals and to which the thesis hopes to contribute. The aim is to develop the argument that the role of festivals is changing by establishing critical viewpoints on how and why the changes have come about, how they have informed cultural policy making and how cultural policy has impacted on the organisation and management of festivals.

CHAPTER TWO - CRITICAL CONTEXT

Introduction

The purpose of the thesis is to examine how the role of international arts festivals has changed over time and what strategies have been adopted to manage new expectations and demands in the twenty-first century. While little earlier literature has addressed the specific questions this thesis is exploring, theoretical work from a range of disciplines has helped inform how key ideas are understood and incorporated into discussion. Earlier studies have also helped to guide the design and direction of the investigation. The aims in this chapter are to contextualise the historical, cultural and political environment in which the EIF operates and to suggest a theoretical framework for the analysis of evidence produced by the case study.

Historical literature on the origins and development of the concept of ‘festival’ is explored to establish how its meaning has evolved and grown more complex over time. This work indicates a close relationship between the concept of festival and that of ‘culture’ and the chapter examines relevant theories in relation to the meaning of culture as it has shifted and evolved in response to sociological and political influences. The research focuses on the period since the establishment of the EIF when government involvement in supporting culture in the UK became formalized and official, and the chapter examines literature on the development of cultural policy in the UK in these years which have seen the rapid growth of festivals worldwide. The aim is to understand how festivals have become harnessed to multiple policy agendas today and the literature referenced, therefore, includes recent reports and consultations commissioned by public authorities and national and international governments as well as relevant academic studies.

To establish the cultural and political context in which the EIF was launched and the post devolution environment in which it operates in Scotland today, the research has sought relevant theories on nationhood and national identity, especially in the context of Scotland’s particular history and circumstances. The

chapter also reviews literature on management theory, on marketing and corporate communications and on partnership and collaboration which is relevant to the analysis which follows on how these aspects of the EIF's operating strategy are changing.

2.1. Festival

Historical accounts establish that the concept of festival is a complex one because its origins bring together ancient oppositions. Pick, in his history of government funding for the arts, *The Arts in a State*, writes that 'at the great festivals, obeisance was made both to Apollo, the god of pure idealism, and to Dionysus, the god of revelry, lust and revolution' (1988:10). He suggests a dynamism at the heart of festival which indicates both the potential intractability which festivals might present to cultural policy makers and stakeholders today and the qualities which attract artists and audiences. Historians Gold (2005) and Zarilli (2006) and sociologist Segal (2009) situate the origins of festival in ancient religious rituals which celebrated the spiritual and enacted communal identity but also, in the more chaotic festivals of Bacchanalia and Saturnalia, which celebrated the subversion of order and accepted norms, albeit for a carefully specified period sanctioned by the authorities. Friedrich (2000) and Segal (2009) suggest that these aspects of festival survive in carnivals, feasts and ferias which they identify as the predecessors of international arts festivals today 'rooted on the borderline between pagan and religious life' (Segal 2009:112). For Friedrich (2000), while carnivals are about joy and celebration, festivals also retain 'mystical, ritualistic and symbolic aspects' from their religious roots which make them more complex and which attach to the cultural values they celebrate. This continuing connection can be identified in the language practitioners use today: 'there is a longing for being close to art and that which is sacred, a bond that becomes faint, fragile yet vital in our technology driven and profit seeking societies' (Focroulle, in Autissier 2009:16).

The social significance of festivals is also emphasised by Friedrich (2000:ix) 'festivals are the manifestation through which a society or group makes plain its consciousness of its own identity and its determination to preserve its identity'.

Autissier (2009:12) builds this further by suggesting that 'European festivals crystallize the values underlying the civilization from which they stem'. Bertho (in Autissier, 2009) complicates this by arguing that international arts festivals today, because of their focus on culture, are characterised by their open-ness to other cultures, and Focroulle (in Autissier 2009:15) speaks of the 'crossbreeding' and intercultural dialogue explored through art which makes them a site of cultural collaboration and recognition rather than of national affirmations and exclusions. Bertho's statement that they 'localise the world and globalise the town that hosts' (in Autissier 2009:49) offers a focus for examining the operation of the EIF, which has its roots in the city of Edinburgh, and brings the world to Scotland.

Historical accounts also indicate that festivals contain a range of different relationships. Friedrich's view that the symbolic and ritualistic aspects of festivals imply 'power relations between organisers and participants who will inevitably have different agendas' (Friedrich 2000:15) chimes with Gold's account of the way festivals have been used by those in power to send out political or civic messages. Gold gives the example of the French Revolutionaries who, while retaining the popular power of traditional festivals which allowed the population to let off steam, tried to curb the excess by re-naming them 'The Secularisation Festival of Reason' or 'Festival of Labour' (Gold 2005:30). These historical accounts suggest that the concept of festival is powerful because it is able to accommodate a diverse range of relationships and expectations. Audiences and performers hope for a transcendent experience of beauty, perfection or awe, an escape from the everyday which may also be achieved through a celebration of subversion and disorientation. Organisers have different agendas which may include asserting influence, control or power as well as gaining profile and economic benefits and fostering social cohesion.

In researching how festivals operate today, the European Festivals Association (EFA) is a key resource for examining how contemporary international arts festivals in Europe have developed from ancient origins. Established in 1952 as a membership association of European festivals, including the EIF, it runs a programme of workshops, conferences and publications, promotes international dialogue and provides a platform for debate between artists, practitioners and

academics. In *Cahier de l'Atelier* (2008), a collection of essays on the future of festival by Festival Directors, (including Brian McMaster, Festival Director of the EIF from 1992 to 2006), the core mission of festivals is defined as 'despite all high expectations in terms of city marketing, tourism, economic impacts and other ancillary effects, an artistic one' (Brlek 2008). The essays discuss artistic and cultural issues for international arts festivals and the role of the state in supporting them. The EFA offers the practitioners' point of view.

The *European Festival Research Project* (EFRP)² is an academic research consortium which also organises seminars, workshops and publications on the management of international arts festivals in the twenty-first century. Its recent publication *The Europe of Festivals: From Zagreb to Edinburgh, intersecting viewpoints*, (2009) offers a suite of essays organised around the themes of *Festivals and Territories*, *Festival Partnerships* and *The Challenge of the Long Term* which engage with key issues for European festivals today through historical (Autissier 2009), cultural (Klaic 2009; Steil 2009), sociological (Maughan 2009) and anthropological (Bertho, 2009) perspectives. Chapter Six, explores the increasing importance of partnerships for the EIF and is informed by Klaic's work on *Festival Partnerships* which states that running a festival today means 'a constant search for new partnerships' (Klaic 2009:105). The other academic work specifically about international arts festivals is a recent collaborative research project, *Arts Festivals and the European Public Culture (Euro-Festival)*, funded through the EU in 2009, which offers a discussion of the history of festivals and their recent proliferation, or festivalisation, from a more sociological viewpoint (Segal 2009; Sassatelli 2009).³

² Research consortium of the Budapest Observatory, De Montfort University, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, Leiden University and University Paris 8 (institute of European Studies) with the support of European Festivals Association and Arts Co England. Leeds Metropolitan University Joined in 2008.

³ *Arts Festivals and the European Public Culture (Euro-Festival)* (2009.) Collaborative research developed by the University of Sussex Sociology Department, the Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences, (ICCR) Vienna (lead partner), the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, and the Fondazione di Ricerca Istituto Carlo Cattaneo, Bologna. Funded by EU 7th Framework Programme: Creativity, Culture and Democracy.

A formal definition of European festival was produced in 1957 by EFA (then the European Music Festivals Association). Autissier, in her review of the history of the EFA, indicates that the definition was produced because members were concerned at the 'multiplication' of events calling themselves festivals which sprung up after World War Two. The definition is long, suggesting that the membership may have struggled to agree a definition which would fit all members.

A festival is first of all a festive event, a complete programme of artistic representations which transcends the usual programme quality in order to attain an exceptional level in a precise place. Therefore, it offers a specific beauty that can only be attained during a limited period of time. Those characteristics may result from the high quality of performed works (both traditional and experimental) and from the pursuit of perfection as well as from the use of the environment, thus setting a peculiar atmosphere created by the scenery, the character of the host city, the involvement of the local population and the cultural traditions of the region. (Autissier 2009:132)

Autissier (2009) reports that around this time there were criticisms of some of the festivals established after World War Two which other members accused of being 'bourgeois, snobbish and undemocratic' and of prioritising the international over the local and regional (Autissier 2009:134). These same criticisms were levelled at the EIF from the outset as indicated by an article in *The Scotsman* which raged; 'those attending represented the box-at-the-opera approach, the luxuriance of resting into a period of artistic wallowing' (*The Scotsman* 25 August 1962 cited in Bartie 2006:147). It is an important thread in the EIF's cultural environment which Miller (1996) documents in her history of the EIF and which later critics Harvie (2003) and Bartie (2006) provide evidence to refute. Bartie's study of Edinburgh from 1947-1967 paints a vivid picture of the home to the Presbyterian Establishment, receiving, through the festivals, 'a concentrated dose of the arts, a key portent and driving force of change' (Bartie 2006:20-21). Her work helps to build a sense of the historic role of the Edinburgh festivals, particularly the EIF and The Fringe, as a platform for experiment and expression of the new, not only in Scotland, but in the UK and internationally.

Gold's (2005) work is useful in charting the evolution of festivals from ancient celebrations to major international events which have significant economic and political expectations attached to them, such as the Commonwealth and Olympic Games and the European Capitals and Cities of Culture and the thesis argues that similar economic and political expectations have also become associated with major international arts festivals like the EIF. However, practitioners and academics have always been alert to the danger that policy makers will want to exploit the power of festival for a range of different political agendas and may prioritise their expectations of economic and social benefits at the expense of cultural integrity and excellence. As early as 1949, Scottish writer, Hugh MacDiarmid, spoke of the EIF as 'a huge cultural black market' and said that the money changers should be driven from the temple and prevented from making art into entertainment (Miller 2006:19). Autissier records that in 1957 some members of EFA feared that festivals were vulnerable to being made the platforms for state sponsored propaganda, a fear based on their experiences during World War Two (Autissier 2009:132). Bianchini, speaking at an EFRP Symposium on *Leadership and Governance of Artistic Festivals*⁴ on 29 November 2009 in Leeds, suggested that the Capitals of Culture programme had become primarily a political rather than a cultural project. He commented on a 'new style of populist politics in Europe today' giving the examples of Palermo and Naples as Cities of Culture which used the programme of festivities to mask political problems. The way that economic and political expectations may also affect the internal language, thinking and management of cultural events like festivals is also an important consideration which practitioners and academics have addressed (Reason 2006; Hewison 2006).

Recent literature by artists and practitioners is divided on how international arts festivals should engage with the new landscape in which they have 'boomed' (De Greef, 2008:3). Festival Directors Tom Stromberg, Ritsaert ten Cate and Rose Fenton, all contributors to the EFA publication *Cahier de L'Atelier* (2008), propose

⁴ Bianchini, F (2009), Director of the Cultural Policy and Planning Unit at Leeds Metropolitan University, speaking at a Symposium on *Leadership and Governance of Artistic Festivals* led by the European Festival Research Project (EFRP) in association with the UK Centre for Events Management (UKCEM) and the Cultural Policy and Planning Unit (CPPU) at Leeds Metropolitan University, 27-28 November 2009.

artistic responses to the threats posed by the competitive global context and the multiple stakeholder agendas they face. Their solutions range from the radical - that festivals should be abandoned altogether for a while (Stromberg, 2008), to the *avant garde* - that festivals should be blown up and re-invented (ten Cate, 2008), to the creative - proposing new forms using the technology of the new century (Fenton, 2008). Klaic, Maughan and Autissier in Autissier (2009), writing on the management of festivals, see the opportunity to gain improved resources and profile for cultural activity by exploiting the economic and social impacts of festivals to promote more state investment in culture. They suggest that the proliferation of festivals represents an opportunity to raise standards of artistic excellence, to provide high profile international platforms and unique opportunities for collaboration for artists, to reach ever more diverse audiences and to develop the true potential of festival (Klaic, 2009). Such views indicate that festivalisation need not be seen in pejorative terms and suggest that festivals with ambition and the right skill set will be able to thrive in this new environment. However, the question of whether the view that festivals will be able to promote more state investment in culture is hopelessly optimistic needs further exploration.

2.2 Culture

The literature on festival establishes that the concept of culture is closely related to the concept of festival. Gold identifies a first definition of culture in 1871, by Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, as ‘that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society’ (Gold 2005:9). Contrasting with this broad view, Arnold, writing *Culture and Anarchy* a little before Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, proposed a more hierarchical view, that culture is ‘the best which has been thought and said in the world current everywhere.’ Arnold also introduces the idea that culture is a matter of individual effort, of ‘trying to perfect oneself and one’s mind’ (Arnold 1869:108-9).

Arnold’s ideas were influential and can be identified in the arguments put forward for establishing the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) in 1946, and the EIF in the following year - they inform the government’s decision to offer state support to

produce and promote culture and thus to the formation of cultural policy. Arnold's thinking is invoked by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh in the foreword of the programme for the first Edinburgh International Festival of Music and the Arts (later to become the EIF):

We wish to provide the world with a Centre where, year after year, all that is best in music, drama and the visual arts can be seen and heard amidst ideal surroundings [...] we have had ever before us the highest and purest ideals of art in its many and varied forms. May I assure you that this Festival is not a commercial undertaking in any way? It is an endeavour to provide a stimulus to the establishing of a new way of life centred round the arts. (Miller 1996: vii)

These assumptions are accompanied by an Arnoldian faith in the power of culture to rebuild European civilisation after World War Two and a wish to bring audiences 'a sense of peace and inspiration with which to refresh their souls and reaffirm their belief in things other than material' (Miller 1996:vii) and they underpin the establishment of the EIF and other international festivals founded at the time. It is also clear from the speech that culture and commerce are considered antithetical. Bilton (2007:22) corroborates this in his discussion of how, when the ACGB was established, overt attempts to deploy the arguments of potential economic growth or improved employment figures for supporting culture were considered 'vulgar' by Keynes, the first Chair of the ACGB, and himself a respected economist. The ACGB reflected staunchly Arnoldian assumptions about culture by organising its support and funding mechanisms around the production of culture (understood as the high arts of classical music, theatre, opera and poetry), in centres of excellence and then making this treasury of the nation available to people in mining villages and community centres for their enlightenment, what Bilton terms the 'distribution model' (2007:23).

However, the establishment of the EIF and the fact that it was in Scotland brought to the fore aspects of this concept of culture which were problematic. The first programme had the effect of appearing to reject not only the contemporary but the Scottish. Miller (1996), Bartie (2006) and Harvie (2003) reference the Minutes

of the Edinburgh Festival Society (EFS) which record the Festival Director, Rudolf Bing, refusing to include contemporary music in the festival programme as 'too dangerous an experiment for the first year' and refusing a proposal for an all-Scottish Music Festival to be part of the first Festival as 'dangerous and undesirable' (Festival Society Minutes 1947:331,109). Miller (2006:19) quotes Hugh MacDiarmid's criticisms of the EIF programme: 'I have always been opposed to the notion that cultural advance can be secured by giving any body of people all the culture of the world on tap - and none of their own.' This intervention raised the fraught questions of what Scottish culture might be and what value the EIF should attach to promoting it and the whole question of the EIF's relationship with and influence on Scottish culture is an important area for investigation, particularly in post devolution Scotland.

The question of a Scottish culture is bound up with the question of Scottish identity and Bartie (2006:12) uses McCrone's phrase 'the hunting of the Scottish snark' to indicate the difficulty of identifying a Scottish national cultural identity. McCrone et al (1995:63) suggest that 'because Scottish identity could not take a political form of expression, it was subverted into a cultural backwater of a deformed nationalism'. This idea of deformed nationalism, coined by the Scottish historian Tom Nairn, is part of a strong strain of worry about Scottish identity and culture which burst out just after devolution in a flurry of publications led by Carol Craig's book *The Scots' Crisis of Confidence* in 2003. This was seized upon by the Scottish government and the consequences of low self esteem and achievement were explored with academics and politicians in public conferences which included *Towards a Confident Scotland* in November 2003 and *Scotland's Tipping Point* in November 2004. In 2005 a government commissioned report, *Confidence in Scotland*, made a clear connection between creative and cultural activity and confidence and self esteem. This report provided an official boost for the importance of culture for Scotland if agreement could be had as to what it is, particularly what Scottish culture is and how Scotland can be disentangled from its long cultural existence as part of the UK. McCrone (2004) suggests that devolution offered the opportunity for a new vision and for a distinctive cultural and creative flowering which would open up a broader, more diverse landscape in the future but

also the possibility of a re-assessment of the past. In this respect, Harvie argues that the EIF has had an influence on Scottish culture and proposes that the EIF's cultural impact in Scotland is 'more dynamic, more varied, and often more constructive than is allowed by criticisms that portray it as fully saturated in elitism and consistently disparaging of Scottish culture' (Harvie 2003:13). Bartie's (2006 and 2009) work on the Edinburgh festivals in the sixties supports this.

The development of the study of culture as an academic discipline during the 1950s is associated with the work of Raymond Williams. He argued that 'the idea of culture is a general reaction to a general and major change in the conditions of our modern life' (1958:285) and this association of culture with reactions to and experiences of change is found in Bartie's (2006; 2009) work. She suggests that culture was the vehicle through which many people experienced social changes in the 1960s and that, in Edinburgh, 'the festivals during these decades grappled with definitions of culture, challenging accepted definitions of 'high' and 'low' arts and gradually breaking down distinctions between the two' (Bartie 2006:250). Although her focus is on culture, Bartie is one of the few critics to write specifically about the Edinburgh festivals and she uses the festivals as a 'lens' through which to explore the changing role and meaning of culture in post-war Britain. Her work re-positions the EIF to a central role in leading and influencing social and cultural change and innovation in 1960s Britain and argues convincingly that the EIF was promoting work in Scotland which was uniquely challenging, allowing key themes such as 'assaults on authority', 'sexual liberation' and 'the blurring of boundaries between cultural forms' to be seen for the first time in the UK on the Edinburgh stages (Bartie 2009:210). Miller's 1996 archive of EIF programmes from the time supports this. Implicit in Bartie's work is the assumption that it is an important and legitimate role of festivals to give a platform to new voices and *avant garde* ideas, 'allowing them to transform the mainstream,' as advocated by Williams (1961:246). The idea that festivals have a role as agents of cultural change is part of the history of the EIF, evident in the Lord Provost's inaugural welcome quoted above, and the case study investigates how this role can be asserted in a more political and pressurised environment.

The idea that new work which broke social, political and cultural boundaries was re-defining the term 'culture' is supported by Sinclair (1995) in a history of the first fifty years of the Arts Council. He suggests that defining culture and the arts became 'an unspoken problem' for the ACGB in 1967 as 'the boundaries shift and the markers get up and walk away like Alice's croquet hoops' (Sinclair 1995:151). Bartie (2006) points out that the idea that there were many cultures began to emerge during this period - counter-culture, subculture and underground culture were concepts developed to characterise cultural changes, usually led by young people and artists (Marwick 1998). Hewison (1997), suggests that 'deconstructing' the hierarchical nature of Arnold's concept of culture was a crucially important cultural process and he explores how theoretical definitions of culture continued to change from the 1950s onwards and the extent to which those definitions were translated into institutional practices.

By 1988 Williams found that a definition of culture had become 'one of the most complicated in the English language' because, in Britain, he felt that a more diverse society had reached a point where culture involved 'ideas and values' which were no longer necessarily universally held (Williams 1988:17). The difficulty which Williams diagnosed in 1988 appears to worsen as the twenty-first century progresses. As national and local governments become more involved with culture, they are faced with the challenge of defining it in order to formulate policy. In 2004, the UK Culture Minister, Tessa Jowell, defined culture in the now familiar terms of personal development and the assertion of identity:

'Culture' as opposed to entertainment is art of whatever form which makes demands not only on the maker or performers but on those to whom the work of art or performance is directed.[. . .] Culture defines who we are, it defines us as a nation. And *only* culture can do this. Culture has an important part to play in defining and preserving cultural identity - of the individual, of communities, and of the nation as a whole. (Jowell, 2004:18)

Devolution in 1999 gave an added impetus to the task of defining a distinctively Scottish culture. Yet, in 2003, the text of the first post-devolution policy statement on culture dispensed with definitions. A St Andrew's Day Speech delivered in November 2003 designated culture - without saying what culture was - as being 'at the heart of Scotland's policy making agenda' and indicated that, for First Minister, Jack McConnell:

. . . I believe we can now make the development of our creative drive, our imagination, the next major enterprise for our society [. . .] I believe this has the potential to be a new civic exercise on a par with health, housing and education. (McConnell 2003:4)

The speech expressed the aim of establishing Scotland as an internationally recognised creative hub and the vision is citizen and consumer oriented rather than artist centred. The speech presented culture as a tool for governance 'with the potential to bolster the economy and improve the national image' (Elliot 2007:8).

It appears to have become increasingly difficult for policy makers to define culture during this period. In 2006, Holden (2006) refers to the DCMS website⁵ which states that there is no definition of culture because their policy of multi-culturalism meant that there were no shared definitions, systems and methodologies. In Scotland, no official definition of culture was forthcoming from the Scottish Executive, the Cultural Commission (Boyle 2005) nor SAC during the period from 2004 until SAC was amalgamated into Creative Scotland in 2010. This was noted when the 2006 *Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill* was published in 2007 and an article in *The Herald* reported that complaints had flooded in from leading arts organisations because there was 'no definition of what culture is' (Didcock 2007). The article also reported the concern of the arts constituencies that culture was being seen as a way of delivering government policy goals. The disappointment of practitioners echoes Holden's assertion that the language and definitions used by policy makers 'flow from administrative convenience' and therefore 'do not match people's

⁵ www.arts.gov/pub/Notes/74.pdf : 11 Jan 2006.

everyday understanding and experience of culture’ (Holden 2006:11). Instrumental ideas about culture which inform the language of policy makers, reflecting particular agendas, have come to be at odds with the conception of culture more generally embraced by the public.

A change in the way that the relationship between culture and commerce was understood and expressed in the post-war years forms an important aspect of the story of arts organisations such as the EIF and of the changing influences and expectations governing the roles they might play. Building on critical theories on the development of cultural policy, this thesis sets out to analyse, in the context of the EIF case study, how theoretical ideas influence the language used in cultural policy, the ways that language not only frames discourse but can influence thinking about culture and how this begins to define the way festivals organise themselves and operate.

2.3 Cultural Policy

Pick (1988) makes the point that, as well as the historical aversion to yoking commerce with culture referenced above, in the 1940s and 1950s there was also an aversion to the idea of policy in relation to culture: ‘the post-war British Arts Council, when announcing that its policy was to have no policy, was reasserting a long-held belief that cultural matters were rightly the province of the amateur’ (Pick 1988:4). He suggests that the ACGB reflected a peculiarly British suspicion of European forms of policy on culture as ‘possibly exerting oppressive centralized control’ and that there was a British distaste not only for the idea of policy in relation to culture but also for the idea of an ‘official’ culture. This perception is supported by the fact that, unlike European counterparts, it was only in 1992 that a UK Conservative Government first established a dedicated department to administer the arts in the UK, the Department of National Heritage (DNH), and that the term ‘culture’ was avoided by UK governments until the establishment of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) by a Labour government in 1997. Pick’s suggestion that the arts and culture were felt to be the province of the amateur also explains the prevalence of what might be termed ‘the gentlemanly hobbyist’ in the arts management posts of the early years of arts agencies and

organisations and a lingering assumption that management theory and practice, developed for business and commerce, was inappropriate to the management of culture. Colbert, writing about the management of the arts, indicates that, while management is itself a relatively new discipline, the management of the arts is even more recent and that it is a field which is 'hampered by a twofold legitimacy problem. On the one hand, it is viewed with suspicion by the arts world, and, on the other, it is often taken less than seriously by management scholars' (Colbert 2011:261). This idea is further discussed by Hewison (2006) in his *Demos* pamphlet on cultural leadership, which assesses the Labour government's attempts to relate commercial and cultural practice more closely.

While the concept of overtly making cultural policy was slow to achieve credibility in the UK, the White Paper, *A Policy for the Arts: the First Steps* published in 1965 signalled an acceptance that government was making policy and also a move away from ACGB's policy of supporting only 'high' culture. It announced a wish to 'bridge the gap' between the 'higher forms of entertainment' and traditional ones such as brass bands and pop groups, or even to challenge the existence of a gap (Bartie 2006:195). It also encouraged national and local governments to take more responsibility for culture. The response of local authorities to the White Paper meant that, as they began to get involved in funding cultural projects, they brought with them a culture of strategic policy making and expectations of 'value for money' and accountability. This inevitably influenced the procedures of the arts agencies and arts organisations which became their partners and stimulated a process of professionalisation in the administration of cultural management generally. Bartie notes a shift of control 'from artists primarily interested in the arts in themselves to administrators more concerned with finance and accountability' and quotes Sinclair (1995) on a change in membership of the Panels of ACGB 'from the doers to the administrators' (Bartie 2006:217).

Historical accounts also note the introduction of International political agendas to cultural policy in the post-war years. Gold describes how, in 1985, the European Union initiated the programme of international arts festivals hosted by selected European Capitals of Culture with the argument that 'culture, art and creativity are not less important than technology, commerce and economy' (Gold 2005:222).

While this formulation still reflected a perceived divide between culture and commerce, the move to appropriate the economic potential of festivals was expressed in terms of promoting ‘compatibility of contrasting identities’, shared values and heritage, history and celebration of diversity. This potent mix of objectives indicated how well the idea of festival could accommodate a range of political and economic ideas and present them in a celebratory framework.

The EU Capitals of Culture programme contributed to a landscape of international competition and, as local authorities began to develop cultural policy through engagement with the programme, the use of instrumental arguments for supporting culture, particularly festivals, became ever more acceptable. Gold identifies the establishment of the Capitals of Culture programme as contributing to the phenomenon of cities beginning to use cultural festivals as an opportunity to ‘introduce infrastructural improvements, boost their cultural sectors, attract tourists, create employment, regenerate blighted areas and score points over their rivals’ (Gold 2005:7). The influence of local authority thinking can be seen in Glasgow’s approach to the title of City of Culture in 1990 when the city authorities pioneered the use of the title for raising investment to regenerate the city. They also pioneered the use of impact evaluation studies (Myerscough 1991, 2011; Garcia 2003, 2008) to justify that investment. In Edinburgh civic leaders recognised that they could capitalize on their own international arts festivals and adopted the Festival City strategy, harnessing Edinburgh’s Hogmanay (Foley and McPherson 2004, 2007) and commissioning influential research on festivals (SQW 2005; AEA Consulting 2006; BOP Impact Survey 2011).

Research in the area of cultural policy boomed with the acceleration of investment in festivals by local authorities. The appearance of *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* (Myerscough 1988) and *Measuring the Economic and Social Impact of the Arts* (Reeves 2002) indicate that policy makers, stakeholders and arts organisations grasped at the potential of economic arguments to justify spending on the arts. These publications signal the entry of more overt commercial trends in cultural policy which theorists began to unpick with warnings of the risks inherent in their use as arts advocacy. O’Connor (2002) records the frustrations for cultural providers as local government accountability obliged them to engage with

economists whose systems for data collection only included economic values and had no discourse for cultural value. The economist Peacock noted that the figures he himself had produced in a 1992 ACGB report ‘fail to put a value on many of the socio-economic effects of the arts which are not directly registered in the marketplace’ (ACGB 1992). Snowball and Bragge (2008), in *Why arts practitioners love economic impact studies and cultural economists hate them*, also indicated conceptual and methodological problems with the range of methods and financial indicators used to create impact studies which argue for public funding. They warned that evaluating the complex value of cultural activity in economic terms could actually undermine the artistic values of cultural goods (Snowball and Bragge 2008). Seaman (2011:201) makes the point that, while the results of economic impact studies frequently appear to justify and encourage more public support for the cultural sector, they generally ‘fail to consider the costs as well as the benefits’ and cannot rank competing claims on public funds. He suggests that the finding that a project generates significant economic benefits is ‘a necessary but not a sufficient condition for justifying tax-financed support’ and warns that it could actually weaken the case for public subsidy by confirming the potential for additional earned income or more private sponsorship. Of course this argument does not take account of the fact that festivals like the EIF may be funded by public stakeholders but that the economic benefits they bring are primarily enjoyed by private local businesses.

Other critics are more pragmatic about the usefulness of a ‘bottom line’ figure, which can be easily understood and compared. Johnson and Sack (1996), writing about impact studies in sport, note that ‘public officials, boosters and the media accept the quantifiable which appears to represent reality in order to justify a desired project’ (Johnson and Sack 1996:370). This is a point of view which has worked for the Edinburgh festivals. CEC pioneered the commissioning of economic impact studies on which its Festival City strategy is based. O’Brien (2010) and Galloway (2011) have noted that impact studies are dependent on who has commissioned them and how much they have been able to influence the questions which are asked and the ways in which results and evidence is presented (or not presented). The EIF and other Edinburgh festivals have worked in partnership with

SAC on a series of recent independent research projects and a significant feature of the most recent commission, *Impact Survey of the Edinburgh festivals* (BOP 2011), was its development of 'generic outcomes' and new methodologies with the aim of introducing methods of collecting data on a broader spectrum of more long term intrinsic benefits which cultural economists have identified, such as pleasure, creation of social bonds and expression of communal meaning (Seaman 2011:202). The report made suggestions about how the festivals could undertake work to establish longer term benefits but acknowledged that the survey itself was a 'short term' exercise. Nonetheless, the press release led with the economic data and it remains the most persuasive argument to politicians who are not interested in 'art for arts sake'. How the EIF has worked within an economic environment created by local government reliance on 'value for money' arguments is examined in Chapter Six.

The formulation of cultural policy to support international arts festivals has also been shaped by critical theory on cultural and creative industries:

the 1990s and early 2000s have seen a boom time in cultural policy under the sign of the cultural and creative industries as a result of industrial and cultural changes that have themselves been influenced by broader 'cultural' policy decisions. (Hesmondhalgh, 2005: 5)

Hesmondhalgh (2002, 2005, 2008) offers definitions and analyses of the development of cultural Industries as a concept, placing its emergence in the early part of the twentieth century in response to new technologies which developed new methods of producing and distributing cultural goods, often for commercial gain. He notes that the theory welded together concepts which had been assumed to be antithetical, 'culture versus economy, art versus commerce and high versus low culture' (Hesmondhalgh 2005:7) and that this caused problems for cultural policy makers in the 1980s because it brought together the 'new' industries of broadcast media and film, which were seen as commercial, and the sectors of visual art, crafts, theatre, literature and museums and galleries which were subsidized through public funding as 'art.' New artforms such as film and photography raised questions about a cultural policy of subsidising only high art and

about the criteria which could evaluate them (Hesmondhalgh 2008; Pratt 2005). Pick (1998:39) points out that the British government initially saw the new forms as 'not allies but enemies of the arts' and as potential targets for taxation rather than public support.

The theorising of cultural industries opened up new debates about what exactly culture was and, by bringing together the traditional and the more commercial art forms, introduced more instrumental arguments for supporting it which, in turn, began to affect the way cultural policy was formulated. Worpole and Mulgan (1986:9) identify a new use of the language of business and commerce in a 1985 ACGB report, *A Great British Success Story*. They suggest that this report contains the first official statement of a specifically economic argument for investing in cultural product - that it would make Britain more competitive internationally - and that it deliberately used language designed to appeal to the Conservative government of the time. They cite references to 'excellent sales and returns' and the use of the term 'investment' rather than subsidy to argue for support for the traditional 'high' arts - language which has become the accepted currency of cultural policy documents today.

How festivals fitted into this changing and challenging policy framework is indicated by Hesmondhalgh (2006) who cites case studies in the 1980s documented by Bianchini and Parkinson (1993) of festivals funded through local authority regeneration and economic departments. O'Connor (2002) suggests that this contributed to a 'proliferation' of festivals and event promotions leading to a growth in the academic study of cultural tourism and destination marketing and the use of festivals and events by local authorities as branding strategies where they are seen in primarily economic rather than cultural terms. The re-articulation of the relationship between culture and industry in cultural industries discourse led to a changed concept of culture which morphs into 'creativity' and a new discourse of 'creative industries' followed by 'the creative economy' now prevalent in official cultural policy documents, the negative implications of which have been the subject of academic analysis (Oakley 2009; Pratt and Jeffcut 2009). The key theoretical texts on creative industries were written by economists Richard Caves (2000) and Richard Florida (2002). Florida's theories have been influential with

cultural policy makers, particularly local authorities in relation to profiling their cities. His idea that a new breed of business people, the 'creative class', will flock to creative cities and make them successful implies that such environments can be nurtured or even created. Florida's ideas entered an arena where cities were competing regionally, nationally and internationally for capital, tourists and labour and his ideas are referenced in commissioned research by governments, in the work of think tanks like Demos and consultants and researchers like The Work Foundation and in many local government initiatives. Examples of successful and popular arts-led initiatives such as Tate Modern, the Guggenheim in Bilbao and The Angel of the North in Gateshead are routinely cited in creative industries arguments as demonstrably giving prestige, profile and economic benefits to their cities. The idea that the creative industries could be the 'key new growth sector of the economy' is found in the *Creative Industries Mapping Document* published by the Labour government in 1998.

This publication ushered in government acceptance of creative industries theory, provided an influential definition of what the sector is and used it as a form of cultural branding for the new government's business focused strategies (Bilton 2007:173). It retains the idea of identity associated with culture, specifically asserting an expression of British identity, but creative industries, in which the traditional high arts as well as the new forms are combined, are now an aid to competitiveness in a globalised world. They are defined as 'those activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.' The attribution of more industrial and commercial qualities is clear and the report designated 13 creative industries sectors, which included advertising, architecture and computer software. In the same year Myerscough's *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* presented a set of surveys arguing that the arts and cultural industries were a major contributor to the economy, stimulating tourism, assisting urban renewal and with the potential to generate exports.

The creative industries concept gained international credibility, and, in the 2008 publication *Creative Economy Report* by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in partnership with key world organisations⁶ creative industries are welded into ‘the creative economy,’ seen as a multidisciplinary model dealing with ‘the interface between economics, culture and technology’ and defined as ‘an evolving concept based on creative assets potentially generating economic growth and development’ with creative industries ‘at the heart’ (UNCTAD 2008:4). The report emphasises that developing the creative economy demands ‘effective cross-cutting mechanisms and innovative inter-ministerial policy actions’ (ibid:4).

While festivals are clearly identifiable as part of the creative economy and are featured in the UNCTAD report they are not specifically mentioned in the 1998 *Creative Industries Mapping Document* and make minimal appearance in the theoretical literature on cultural and creative industries discussed. This may be because the festival landscape is so broad and various, with festivals of every kind popular globally, and because the international arts festivals which are the subject of this research, feature a range of art forms rather than just opera, theatre or music. However, it appears evident that festivals are very much affected by the changing language and concepts which these theories have brought. It is notable from the theoretical literature that creative industries and creative economy strategies place great emphasis on partnership and collaboration, some of which was in response to new international funding opportunities for cultural projects through EU programmes. In England, regional arts councils like Arts Council North East (ACNE) were able to pioneer successful partnerships with their Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to access European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) support for culture based creative industries projects in the early 2000s. The idea of ‘cultural partnership’ also became a popular local government policy in the 1990s, partly as a cost cutting exercise and arguably because of creative industries arguments about the importance of

⁶ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and International Trade Centre (ITC)

partnership and collaboration with economic and business development strategies. The 1999 policy document *Towards the New Enlightenment: a Cultural Policy for the City of Edinburgh*, described as ‘a crucial turning point in cultural policy’ by Lynne Halfpenny, Head of the Culture and Sport Department at CEC in interview on 29 June 2010, brought the Edinburgh festivals and the city together in joint strategies.

However, the discourse of creative industries, evident in research by Demos and NESTA and influential policy documents such as the Work Foundation’s *Staying Ahead: the economic performance of the UK’s creative industries*, (Andari et al 2007), has been dismissed as ‘rhetoric’ rather than a set of ideas, or a valid description of a special sector of the economy by economists and academics (Elliott 2007; Schlesinger 2007; O’Connor 2010). Garnham (2005) suggests that the use of the term ‘creative’ was chosen for the *Creative Industries Mapping Document* (1998) so that the whole of the computer software sector could be included, thus artificially inflating claims about the size and growth of the creative industries sector. While this was changed in 2011, his challenge of the figures used to establish the potential of the sector as an economic driver (Garnham 2005:26) and suggestion that creative industries discourse reflects a deeper political context, a ‘shift from state to market across the whole range of public provision initiated under the Thatcher government’ (Garnham 2005:16) remains important.

Bilton (2007), Galloway (2007) warn that creative industries and creativity discourse not only conflates a range of different kinds of activities relating to cultural production but encourages cultural policy makers to place increasing reliance on economic arguments for cultural subsidy. Reason (2006:85) argues that ‘adopting the language and ideology of a market-driven approach presents a very real danger that arts activity should only be pursued for market-driven objectives’. Lash and Lury (2005) evidence the way that the use of commercial language affects ways of thinking about culture and argue that globalization and its imperatives have resulted in cultural objects being homogenised and used ‘as information, as communications, as branded products, as financial services, as media products’ (Lash and Lury 2005:12). In terms of festivals, this is a danger also identified by Klaic (2007) who refers to some international arts festivals’ ‘ongoing

commodification of artistic works as cultural goods, offered in large programmatic packages' (Klaic 2007:264) and by Foley et al (2006) on the ubiquity of international arts festivals. These critics warn against the commercial rhetoric which risks that cultural policy makers and arts organisations themselves begin thinking of the arts as commodities.

In 2010 it was notable that, as the SNP Government was oriented strongly towards the economy, the new cultural body, Creative Scotland adopted the economic language and commercial concepts of government: flexible grants to arts organisations were replaced by 'strategic commissions' or 'franchises' and the words 'creativity' and 'talent' were ubiquitous, replacing culture and art as more commercially oriented descriptions of what Creative Scotland is supporting. This reflects the language of the creative economy and the media business rather than that of artists and their, often very different, view of what they are doing and who they are. Like the EIF, and also influenced by the more business oriented work and language of Mission Models Money (MMM), an agency promoting a more business oriented approach to the management of cultural organizations, which is discussed in Chapter Six, Creative Scotland has donned the language of government and it is not yet clear how far this will influence its own practice and that of the artists, arts organisations, creatives and the creative businesses it seeks to support.

The term 'creativity' has also been the subject of critical attention. It was a focus of the *Creative Industries Mapping Document* of 1998 and Florida's statement that 'creativity has emerged as the single most important source of economic growth' (Florida 2002:320) has been influential. Bilton (2007) points out that the term has become a kind of mantra - something all businesses must have and which a number of districts, towns or regions have used to re-brand themselves so that 'creativity has now come to be seen as an industrial asset in its own right' (Bilton 2007:164). Schlesinger analyses the language of two recent and influential public documents, *The Cox Review* and *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, both published in 2005, and suggests that an uncritical acceptance of the term creativity and the discourse of the creative economy has 'subordinated cultural activities to economic policy logic' and that it has become a form of shorthand for government thinking and policy making (Schlesinger 2007:7).

The discourse of cultural and creative industries has had the effect of legitimising economic arguments for cultural activity and helped them to gain currency. The literature suggests that theory has become a powerful driver of cultural policy and that there is a danger of policy makers and arts organisations being ‘captured’ by the thinking and language of economists and management consultants and that the value of cultural creativity is becoming difficult to distinguish from the concept of ‘creativity’ across a spectrum of socio-economic activity (Cunningham 2006). This has created a more opportunistic and market oriented cultural policy environment in which arts organisations like the EIF must negotiate a number of new roles.

2.4 The case study of the EIF

2.4.1 Maintaining a Competitive Edge: Marketing and Communications

The focus of the case study is on aspects of the EIF’s operation where changes in the economic, cultural and political environment have impacted on its strategies and operating practices. Key areas subjected to empirical investigation and analysis are: marketing and corporate communications; the increasing importance of developing new forms of partnerships and the impact of changing political agendas.

Literature on current commercial marketing strategy, corporate communications and competitive positioning by Jobber (2001), Hooley et al (2004), Cravens and Piersey (2006) and Joep (2004) give a picture of the way marketing is used in the commercial sector. The general view is that marketing is now a strategic rather than an operational role within organisations (Hooley et al 2004: 419) implying that it has a more dynamic and executive function than previously and affects the whole organisation. Kotler (1975), Mokwa et al (1980) and Diggle (1984) describe how a separate field of arts marketing emerged from commercial theory in the 1980s and developed its own discourses, publications, journals and academic teaching. They argue that a separate discipline developed because it was recognised that art is created independently of concerns about markets. This crucial difference between marketing the arts and commercial marketing is acknowledged by Hirschman (1993) and Colbert et al (1994, 2001) who suggest that

the role of marketing will be different in arts organisations because arts marketing aims to match an appropriate audience with the finished product and the focus therefore moves from transactional to relational operations. Hill et al (2003:2) indicate that the most significant feature of successful arts marketing is that of developing a relationship with customers since 'it is their needs which define the relevance of an organisation's work and their resources empower it'. Hooley et al (2004:4) also emphasise the importance of arts organisations making sure that their marketing operations are externally focused. The theoretical literature tells a story of arts organisations, funded by the state to produce art, gradually engaging with the ideas of conventional marketers like Drucker (1964) and beginning to understand that their mission was also to create customers. A new approach to marketing was adopted by arts organisations in the early 1980s led by the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) which began running Arts Marketing Courses. In this they were reflecting changes in the way the concept of marketing had been theorized and developed in the commercial world. Hooley et al (1993) refer to Stephen Greyser's argument that 'marketing has now successfully 'migrated' from being a functional discipline to being a concept of how businesses should be run' (Greyser 1997). They also note that this concept of marketing as a key function had been adopted by organisations other than conventional commercial companies including not for profit enterprises like charities and the arts. However, they argue that companies differ in their ability to deliver long term performance between those who implement robust marketing strategies, which make the customer a strategic priority, and those who 'pay lip service' to marketing (Hooley et al 1993:4-5).

The problem for arts marketers was to persuade financially hard pressed arts organisations to put cash into marketing rather than production. Hill et al (2003) claim that the discipline of arts marketing has contributed valuable ideas to marketing theory and practice generally, including a focus on the importance of networks and relationships, an emphasis on creating positive media relations and the development of new ideas on using computerized ticketing systems as tools for marketing as well as selling tickets to events. All of these areas have gained importance for the EIF, and are examined further in Chapter Five.

Theoretical work on the marketing of cities also contextualises information produced by the case study. McCrone (2004) charts the way that, from the 1980s, cities began to compete in packaging cultural assets like architecture, festivals, symphony orchestras or thriller writers to attract tourism and inward investment. They used commercial branding techniques and the literature on this suggests that establishing an effective brand identity is a powerful tool of corporate communications which arts organisations can use in order to compete in a crowded market place. Andreason and Kotler (2003:174) in their work on strategic marketing for non profit organisations, note that, in a competitive arena, strategic identity and branding can significantly help non-profit organisations achieve increased programme awareness and market share. While Andreason and Kotler acknowledge that the use of branding by publicly funded arts organisations can be challenged because they can ‘ill afford to wage corporate style branding battles’ on taxpayers’ money, their main argument is that branding confers benefits. For the EIF and other festivals which are income generating and rely on sales and sponsorship as part of the funding mix, an engagement with the branding process has been accepted as a vital marketing strategy intrinsic to their ability to compete.

Theoretical work on the value of branding ranges from a heightened sense of its power to a pragmatic view of its worth:

A brand is a metaphorical story that’s evolving all the time. People have always needed to make sense of things at a higher level. We all want to think that we are part of something bigger than ourselves. Companies that manifest that sensibility in their employees and consumers invoke something very powerful. (Travis 2000:7)

the brand is simply a way for the brand owner to make money [. . .] an economic tool that provides value for its owner and also value for its buyer. (Schulz and Schulz 2004:13)

The spectrum of theoretical work on branding includes views which would appear to chime comfortably with the mission of an arts organisation: ‘buying decisions

are made on promises that transcend products, and promises are rooted in human emotions. It's all about feelings not figures' (Travis 2000:3). Schulz and Schulz (2004:66) describe the brand as about 'human interactions and interfaces, building a relationship or bond'. Chernatony (2001:5) notes that 'brands are powerful entities because they blend functional, performance-based values which are rationally evaluated, with emotional values which are affectively evaluated'. Murray (2000:79) suggests that the brand can be 'the unique DNA that shapes the development of every aspect of an organisation' and that the process has the potential to enable a re-thinking and re-organising of the internal operation of an organisation as well as modernizing its external image. For an arts organisation the process of branding can therefore be helpful in defining what their core purpose is as well as achieving a distinctive visual identity. While aesthetic and philosophical values will be innate features of an arts organisation and will be read into the imagery chosen to express it, the company may be less accustomed to thinking about and promoting their assets. Branding emphasises the importance of relating to customers and of exploiting their conscious and unconscious desires.

Chapter Five explores how these theories have played out in a more competitive arena for international arts festivals and how the development of arts marketing has affected the structure and management of the EIF and the roles it performs. It considers what risks there may be in using commercial processes which could change the focus and language of the organisation and distract energies and resources away from its artistic agenda.

2.4.2 A new age of collaboration: profiting from partnerships and networks

Both arts practitioners like Klaic (2009) and cultural policy theorists like Pratt (2005) see strategic partnership as an important new area for arts organisations. Theoretical literature from the commercial sector confirms that developing strategic partnerships, collaborations and networks has become well established in the commercial world since the 1990s, as a response to increased competition, scarce resources, internationalization of markets and changes in technology (Hooley et al 2004). Brandenburger and Nalebuff (1996) coin the term 'co-opetition' to describe an often uneasy but advantageous alliance between rivals,

an idea which is particularly relevant as, in Edinburgh, a group of festivals, formerly operating as rivals, are working together, in response to more intense international competition, for strategic and marketing advantages. The idea of co-competition is an area of developing critical theory⁷ but Stein's 2010 survey on existing literature on the subject included no reviews of work dealing with cultural organisations. However Shevchenko (2008) draws on collaboration theory by Selin and Chavez (1995) cited in Shevchenko (2008) in her MSc Dissertation *Collaboration in the festival industry: Festivals Edinburgh - exception or trend?* to argue that the Festivals Edinburgh model was unique and that, at that time, no other collaborative initiatives in the festival industry were found.

Achrol (1991), Webster (1992), Quinn (1992) and Morgan & Hunt (1994) indicate key factors contributing to the success of strategic alliances through partnerships in the commercial world which can be summarised as: relative understanding and acceptance of power relationships; ability to provide commitment and interdependence; a sharing of social norms and mutual trust. Lambert et al (1996) suggest that new theories of collaboration have had the effect of re-defining the general role of marketing and increasing its focus on partnership rather than competition. However they also warn that strategic alliances are 'no panacea' for competitive problems and will always carry risks in that they make partners more vulnerable and require highly developed managerial skills (Lambert et al 1996).

In recent years cultural organisations have also been required to collaborate with stakeholders, particularly local authorities, in partnership arrangements which often bring additional conditions to funding agreements and generate the need for additional meetings, management skills and paperwork. Theorizing of new and complex partnership strategies has been accompanied by the emergence of Network Theory on how to drive organisational performance in a globally connected business environment. Formulations of different types of networks are

⁷ For instance, the EFRP is running a workshop in association with Festival Borštnikovo srečanje, Maribor (Slovenia) *Artistic festivals and continuously operating cultural organisations* which will consider the relationship in terms of 'competitors and partners' already existing as part of the cultural econology in Maribor 21-23 October 2011 - a topic discussed in relation to EIF and other cultural activities in Edinburgh in Chapter 6.

discussed by Cravens et al (1996) including social networks (Scott 2002; Cross et al 2005) and innovation networks (Dhanaraj & Parkhe 2006), both with some relevance to arts organizations but requiring new expertise, time and energy to manage engagement. These partnerships strategies have implications for small, poorly resourced organisations, like those in the arts, and Hooley et al (2004:175) suggest that they could lead to 'new organisational forms and new ways of doing business with the customer'. Chapter Six explores how cultural partnership and collaboration between competing organisations has worked in Edinburgh and uses the work of Hooley et al (2004) and Cravens et al (1997) to examine how stable or sustainable such alliances are and what special management skills and competencies are required to keep such alliances afloat. It examines how far existing commercial practice is utilised and whether cultural organisations have developed new models of partnership more appropriate to their organisational missions.

2.4.3 Changing government agendas

The Scottish National Party (SNP) has been in government in Scotland since 2007 and the political environment has been particularly open to debate about Scottish culture, nationhood and identity and the role of arts organisations in promoting them. Literature on nationhood and national identity contextualises issues discussed in Chapter Seven. Bennett (2001:2) suggests that many national governments are now moving away from a unified notion of nationhood: 'the primary surface that government is called to act upon is no longer that of a nationally unified society but the differentiated and often de-territorialised field of communities' and McCrone (2004:5) agrees that concepts of states, societies and nations are less definite now because of what he calls 'the fissiparous tendencies in the modern world.' These ideas are supported by evidence gathered from the Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey (1999) analysed by Paterson et al (2001) in a study which asks what impact the existence of a Scottish Parliament has had on national identity. It offers evidence that Scots feel increasingly Scottish rather than British, particularly since the Scottish Parliament was established. Paterson et al (2001:120) conclude that people have begun to shift in their identification as British or Scottish, depending on the issue and circumstance, 'national identity is

not so much a matter of sentiment, as of social and political practice'. Murkens et al (2001:31) and Keating (2001) also argue that there is evidence of a 'rejection of the old categories of statehood and a search for new forms of autonomy' suggesting that small countries can compensate for their lack of power and resources 'by their ability to sustain internal debate and ease of change.' The inference is that Scotland, as a small and stateless nation, can inhabit multiple identities which could be an asset in generating a place in the global world.

The general consensus of key writers is that, since devolution, Scotland is also well placed to 'redefine the relationship between politics and culture' (Elliott 2007:8). However, the SNP has an overall policy priority of boosting the economy and the word 'culture', with reference to the arts, makes no appearance in their National Performance Framework. It only appears in a sub-clause of one of the 15 National Outcomes - that of National Identity: 'Using culture in the promotion of Scotland - making Scotland a great place to live, work or visit and helping to manage our reputation as an independent minded and responsible nation'.⁸ A specific reference to the festivals comes under the National Outcome 'We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe', which has, as a sub-outcome, that 'Edinburgh's Festivals have a global competitive edge.' Elliott has criticised this sort of instrumental approach towards cultural policy and has argued that 'creating a lively, current national identity through culture must be artist and producer led, rather than policy driven' (Elliott 2007:8) and this remains a challenge for cultural policy making in Scotland under the SNP.

The potential of the use of culture in a diplomatic context was brought to the fore in UK political discourse in 2007 by an influential Demos pamphlet, *Cultural Diplomacy*, which proposes that culture could provide 'the operating context for politics.' As noted in Chapter One, the idea is built upon the associated concept of 'soft power' elucidated by Nye (2004:x) as: 'the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals and policies.' *Cultural Diplomacy* identified emerging trends in global relations which led it to suggest

⁸ <http://home@Scotland.gov.uk>. Scottish Government website Accessed 29 September 2011.

that 'culture could become the most important tool for public diplomacy practitioners, making its effective use vital. British public diplomacy will increasingly need to have culture at its heart' (Bound et al 2007:20). The point at which this new idea intersects with those on nationhood above is in the view that there is a need for more complex and flexible concepts of national identity: 'our understanding of our national image will therefore require a more pragmatic, pick and mix approach. Multiple nation identities - the thatched cottage sitting alongside Tate Modern - should not be cause for alarm' (ibid:79).

While cultural diplomacy has proved a seductive idea for cultural organisations, and appears to usher the culture sector into powerful new arenas, it is more difficult to find analysis of it in the literature of international relations and, while the role which celebrities can play is referenced, the part that culture and cultural organisations like festivals can play in the 'new diplomacy' (Kelly 2010) does not appear to be a major topic yet within the discipline. Chapter Seven explores whether and how the Scottish government is using culture to shape international relations and what new roles this offers the EIF in Scotland, the UK and internationally.

2.5 The changing role of festivals

Literature on the history of international arts festivals establishes that festivals have, throughout the course of time, been used by the powerful to celebrate and give profile to nations, regions and places (Gold 2005; Miller 1996; Harvie 2003; Bartie 2006). Historians, sociologists (Segal 2010), and cultural critics (Williams 1958, 1981; Hewison 1997, 2006) describe a changing and dynamic inter-relationship between culture and commerce and between culture and politics which characterized European cultural life in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Festivals have historically been imbued with cultural power and, in recent times, the economic potential of festivals has been recognised through impact studies (Myerscough 1991; Garcia 2008) which have gained a powerful foothold in assessment and evaluation of cultural projects. Cultural economists have rehearsed the methodological weaknesses of impact studies and the danger of adopting commercial methods of evaluating cultural projects (Snowball and Bragge

2007; Seaman 2011; Towse 2011). Nonetheless, the enthusiasm of governments to harness the perceived cultural and economic advantages of successful cultural and arts provision has spurred increasingly active involvement in promoting international arts festivals over recent years. As a result, festivals have boomed, producing a crowded and competitive market place (AEA Consulting 2006; De Greef 2008; Stromberg 2008).

Hesmondhalgh (2002, 2005, 2008) establishes how critical theory has contributed to these changing relationships between culture and commerce and proposed new articulations of what culture is, who it is for and how it should be supported, which have influenced both the theory of cultural policy and its practice. This has resulted in changes in the language of cultural policy and of institutional administrative practice (Hewison 1997; Schlesinger 2007). Earlier work has raised concern about the rise of creative industries rhetoric in cultural policy-making (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt 2005; Schlesinger 2007) and analysis by NESTA and a number of academic organisations which have been established in recent years in response to the development of cultural policy⁹ continues to chart the effects of discourses of creativity and innovation on cultural policy and cultural institutions. These organisations have contributed to establishing closer links between policy makers, academics and practitioners by undertaking research which can generate income and prestige for the universities to which they are attached (Scullion & Garcia (2005:123). This thesis aims to build on and extend this body of critical work through examining the influence, at ground level, of the creative industries turn on the operations and priorities of a leading cultural organisation, the EIF. It also builds on the work of scholars and practitioners (Klaic 2009; Autissier 2009) who have identified how festivalisation has brought about artistic and political challenges for international arts festivals today as they are presented with increasing and often conflicting priorities and agendas in a newly competitive landscape.

⁹ For example the Cultural Policy and Planning Unit (CPPU) at Leeds, the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies (CCPS) at Warwick University, the School of Sociology and Social Policy at Liverpool and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research (CCPR) at Glasgow University.

While there is a body of recent critical literature about the instrumental functions of festival and their impact as events generating income through tourism and assisting urban regeneration (Prentice & Anderson 2003) and a sizeable and growing literature on their economic and other impacts (Myerscough 1991, 2011; Garcia 2003, 2008), very little work, apart from that of consultants, focuses on the strategic operation of festivals within this new policy environment. The thesis aims to address this gap and contribute new knowledge by investigating how the priorities and operational strategies adopted by a leading international arts festival have changed in response to a transformed competitive and policy context. It therefore hopes to extend theoretical work on the way that the roles and operations of cultural organisations are conditioned by wider political and market circumstances and to reflect on the question of whether cultural organisations can themselves contribute to those circumstances in a more active way than they have previously done.

The case study investigates how the particular cultural, social and political circumstances in post-devolution Scotland create a unique operating context for the EIF. Since ancient times, the idea that culture can be used by leaders and countries 'to show who they are, assert their power and build lasting relationships' has been recognised (Bound et al 2007:11). This thesis investigates the extent to which the EIF's iconic international brand has been recognised as a source of opportunity by Scotland's political leadership and how this affects the role and operations of the EIF. It therefore builds on an emerging body of work in relation to the role of culture as a tool of cultural diplomacy (ibid:12).

CHAPTER THREE - A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Introduction

One of the few existing studies of the EIF notes that: ‘despite being widely acknowledged as the model for the evolution of many of the world’s estimated 10,000 arts festivals, and being a major world festival itself, its own history has barely been explored’ (Bartie 2006:6). This chapter charts a trajectory from the establishment of the EIF as an international festival promoting European high arts in Edinburgh, programmed from a base in London, to the organisation it is today. The aim is to establish an historical context for the EIF case study which follows. The chapter is arranged in three sections which follow the cultural, political and social changes which the EIF has had to negotiate and explores how they have impacted on the way the Festival operates and how Festival Directors have responded to changing environments. It draws on literature which charts the historical development of the EIF and on original documentation (letters, minutes of meetings) drawn from the National Library of Scotland (NLS) and EIF and CEC archives. Interviews with key players also provided material.

The key text is Miller’s (1996) study of the EIF from 1947 to 1996 based on the Edinburgh Festival Society archives. It is an historical account presented in chapters which focus on the Festival Directors and provides a vivid description of the times and a thorough index of the programmes and artists who appeared which is invaluable for research. However it does not generally seek to place the EIF in a wider cultural policy context. Other viewpoints were drawn from the autobiographies of former Festival Directors, Drummond (2000), Harewood (1981) and Ponsonby (2009), which offer necessarily partial but lively accounts of events in Scotland from the perspective of the London office. Texts by Crawford (1997), a Publicity Manager of the EIF, and Bruce (1975), a BBC Arts Producer, provide anecdotal material and historian Dudley Edwards (1991) offers first hand accounts of events. More theoretical analysis of the social and cultural context in Edinburgh

which has fostered the development of the festivals by Harvie (2003) and Bartie (2006,2009) offers assessments of the significance and legacy of the EIF.

Historical accounts establish that the launch of the EIF brought together a group of very different individuals and institutions in a unique partnership on what initially appeared to be an unlikely mission (Miller 1996; Dudley Edwards 1991; Bruce 1975). Bartie (2006:46) draws particular attention to the fact that, from the beginning, there was government involvement in this cultural venture and that it was a pioneering act on the part of the city authority and the first time in British history that 'a local government was spending time and money on arranging an international arts festival during a time of austerity and shortage'. The principal partners in the venture were Edinburgh Corporation, the local council of what was then a provincial capital city with little reputation of promoting the arts, and the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) newly established in London with a policy of supporting culture according to the Arnoldian principle of promoting the very best of the 'high arts' - opera, drama, classical music and ballet. The partners were brought together by Sir Henry Harvey Wood, the Scottish representative of the British Council who made the vital introductions. This partnership between local Edinburgh and Establishment Britain was created to promote an international arts festival with European opera at its core. It was truly an audacious venture to undertake in the home of The Church of Scotland, a powerful national body based in Edinburgh, with a history of Presbyterian opposition to theatre and festivity. Bartie (2006:43) describes the launch, with its inaugural Service of Praise in St Giles Cathedral attended by dignitaries of church and state, as an illustration of the 'new role culture had been given to play in society through increased government awareness of the arts, backed by government funding for the arts.' A more detailed discussion of the British government's use of arts and culture is found in Weingärtner (2006), *The Arts as a Weapon of War. Britain and the Shaping of National Morale in the Second World War*.

The very different cultural and political institutions and individuals involved in the venture meant that, from the very beginning, there were unavoidably different agendas in operation and different expectations of the EIF. Edinburgh as a city was suddenly placed in the limelight, enacting a new cultural role which appeared to

come as a surprise, not universally welcomed by all of its citizens, including its some of its councillors. This produced tensions and problems, some of which are recognizable as common to international arts festivals generally, such as issues of funding and governance, and others which are unique to Scotland. The concept of culture which the Festival organisers espoused drew an early challenge as the question of what place Scottish art and culture should have in the festival programme emerged. The fact that the Festival was international also meant that it was European culture to which artists and audiences were introduced, the yardstick was not London. The partnership was launched in a time of post-war societal change and with a complete lack of experience on the part of those appointed to deliver the project. A sense of the bewilderment experienced by those who found themselves organising an international arts festival under these conditions is clear from a Minute of the Edinburgh Festival Society (EFS) published in the review of the first ten years:

The strange phenomenon is that Edinburgh hardly seems to be aware of the position to which she has been elevated [...] the problems confronting the Festival Society are never ending [...]. It must be constantly aware of changing conditions in a world where values are unbalanced and unrelated to truth, where endeavour is misguided and where, in consequence, the despair of frustration is the rule rather than the exception [...]. History will judge whether - was it wisdom or folly? (EFS 1956)

3.1 The High Art Years - 1947 - 1978

In his autobiography *The Tongs and the Bones* Lord Harewood, Festival Director from 1961-1965, comments that the EIF was ‘founded on quite a small financial investment, mostly on the know-how and capability of Rudi Bing and the vision of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh’ (1981:83). He indicates an important feature of the EIF story which is that it is driven by exceptional individuals as well as by the clashing of institutions in political and societal change. Bing was an Austrian intellectual who had fled Nazi Germany and was General Manager of Glyndebourne Opera House in Sussex, an institution internationally known for its summer opera festivals. He was seeking a home for Glyndebourne in the aftermath of the war

and, after trying Oxford, Cambridge and Bath, was persuaded of the suitability of Edinburgh by Sir Henry Harvey Wood, despite the fact that, as he admitted himself in an article in *The Scotsman*, Edinburgh was considered to have ‘no claim to respect in the cultural sphere’ (Harvey Wood, 7 August 1947). Bing’s autobiography *5,000 Nights at the Opera* confirms that his primary purpose in establishing the EIF was to keep Glyndebourne Opera alive (Crawford 1997:21). Dudley Edwards (1991) contextualises this background by noting that, at that time, Sir John Christie, Glyndebourne’s Chair, was at loggerheads with Keynes, Chair of ACGB, about Glyndebourne’s continuation. Sir Henry Harvey Wood saw an opportunity for Scotland and championed the idea of Edinburgh as a diplomatic haven for Glyndebourne (Dudley Edwards, 1991:15).

Bing’s conception of the culture that the Festival would promote was exclusively one of ‘high art’ in the classical European tradition. However, the fact that the Festival was being hosted in Scotland meant that this was challenged from the beginning. In the first year Scottish arts practitioners rejected Bing’s vision as too narrow and promoted competing programmes featuring contemporary theatre and traditional music involving Scottish artists. This ‘more radical definition of culture and its role in society’ (Bartie 2006:64) was to become The Fringe and the Edinburgh People’s Festival and thereby created a multiplication of festivals and a dynamic between them which has been an inextricable aspect of the EIF’s cultural environment ever since and has shaped the development of cultural policy in the city:

This festival has been particularly successful because it has in a sense been its own critic. So the EIF was the inspiration behind the Fringe, we have a party, you are not invited, well we’ll have our own. More specifically it nurtured some of its progeny like the Tattoo which came directly out of EIF. It was this landscape, very fertile landscape, that gave rise to things like the Book Festival, or even Science Festival - people getting a sense of what they can do for their sector. Success brings success, like brings like. (Interview with Jonathan Mills 3 February 2010)

The idea of having competing festivals operating at the same time was not cultural policy in any formal sense but paved the way to a very new profile for Edinburgh which has led to its successful branding as the Festival City.

It was inevitable that there would be tensions around concepts of culture as the cultural and religious environment he encountered in Scotland was quite alien to Bing. He noted in his memoir that he had suggested that the opening event of the first Festival might be a High Mass in the Cathedral and ‘later wondered how his festival plans had survived the blunder’ in the city of John Knox (Miller 1996:4). When the Festival idea was announced, James Bridie, a prominent Scottish playwright, had warned that Edinburgh, ‘might not easily smooth out her habitual frown’ (Bartie 2006:54) referring to the pervasive influence of the Church of Scotland at all levels of Edinburgh society. Scottish historian, Professor Tom Devine, has characterised the disposition created by the Church’s influence in Scotland as one of ‘intolerance, oppressive social disciplines, an aggressive and rapacious capitalism, sexual guilt and dysfunction and a warped attitude to music, painting and the arts’ (McMillan 2009). It was to be expected then, that the EIF would appear flamboyantly lavish, with its programme of opera, music, theatre and potentially subversive festivity, to a city subject to the ‘cold grey hand of Presbyterianism’ (Bartie 2006:55), particularly during a period of post-war austerity. Bing himself, an habitu   of the opera festivals in Salzburg and Vienna, was also initially doubtful whether the sombre capital city could acquire the necessary festive spirit ‘as understood in the European festival centres’ (Miller 1996:8). However, assisted by a small Festival Committee, Bing programmed a three week festival for 1947 at an estimated cost of £40,000. The City of Edinburgh voted through a £20,000 guarantee fund and £20,000 was raised from citizens, a sum which included the Earl of Rosebery’s derby winnings (Miller 1996:5). The ACGB was slow to join the partnership - Bartie quotes Bridie noting that members of the Scottish Committee of the Arts Council were considered ‘too nationalistic and difficult to work with’ by the London office (Bartie 2006:50) and also notes that they may have been more concerned with supporting the Festival of Britain planned for 1951, but finally a matching two year guarantee commitment was

made in September 1946, dependent on £40,000 being raised from other sources (ibid: 50).

Bing, as Festival Director, encountered a number of practical difficulties which he might not have anticipated as part of the role. Some of these were due to the unique conditions of post-war Britain as he had to negotiate the de-requisitioning of hotels in order to receive the expected visitors and the de-rationing of curtain material to furnish them. He also had to make special arrangements with the Ministry of Food to ensure sufficient supplies were available for visitors as rationing was still in force and the Festival Club was initially set up to supply meals for around 2,500 people a day (Miller 1996:66). He also came up against a fundamental problem which was to prove an acute and intractable thorn in the side of Festival Directors for many years - the unsuitability of the venues available. Early on Sir Thomas Beecham said it was 'madness' to think Edinburgh could mount a Festival when it was 'too mean to take action to create decent venues' (Jack 1990:19). Bing had sold the international festival idea to the City Fathers 'on the understanding that European governments would be prepared to subsidise the appearance of their artists' (Miller 1996:6) but, while venues existed, they were not of a size or quality to take some of the major international opera and ballet productions Bing wanted to bring.

However, the first EIF was an artistic and economic success and brought the Old Vic and Sadlers Wells to Edinburgh as well as featuring the Scottish National Orchestra and the BBC Scottish Orchestra. Miller describes an iconic moment when the great conductor, Bruno Walter, was re-united with the Vienna Philharmonic for the first time after the war, a symbolic image of the peace and reconciliation this cultural venture was intended to bring. The EIF also welcomed the Queen who gave it the diplomatic seal of approval as a part of Great Britain's efforts towards recovery and it was attended by hundreds of British and foreign critics, correspondents and broadcasters. During that first Festival, 180,000 tickets were sold. Records of visitors to the city began in 1949 and show that 49,795 visitors were accommodated in the city, rising to 57,032 in 1950 (Miller 1996). It was an auspicious beginning which established that the EIF could achieve cultural and economic success.

When Bing left in 1949 to manage the Metropolitan Opera in New York he was succeeded by Ian Hunter. He had been Bing's assistant and he carried on the high art aesthetic established by Bing and extended it to bring the visual arts into the festival programme with successful Rembrandt and Diaghilev Exhibitions. He also broadened the scope of the August festival season which the EIF had inspired. Renowned for his ability to 'coax large sums of money out of tough and apparently philistine city fathers, whether in London or Hong Kong' (Ponsonby 2009:102), he oversaw the establishment of the Military Tattoo and the inauguration of a fireworks finale at the castle in 1950. Hunter faced two problems which emerged at this stage and continued to demand new skills of Festival Directors through the years. He saw the rise of competition from abroad as Salzburg and Bayreuth were re-established from the ruins of war and with them a number of new festivals began to spring up in Europe so that he had to devise strategies to maintain the EIF in its leading position in an increasingly crowded festival landscape. He also experienced new pressures as the different agendas of stakeholders began to emerge. Edinburgh councillors started to exert pressure on the EIF to make more provision for 'the man on the street' and to programme entertainment which would cover its costs commercially, rather than being paid for by the state. Councillors proposed folk dancing and circus as 'unifying and democratic' forms of entertainment (Miller 1996:97) and Hunter himself proposed reviving the Grassmarket Fair and bringing in folk dancing in the streets from Scotland, Norway and Africa to bring culture to the citizens (Bartie 2006:97). It was suggested that the Festival Society should organise a carnival to 'arouse interest among the general public' (ECCA MoM, 23 February 1956). However Hunter did not stay to manage this kind of entertainment and left in 1956. He went on to become known as Mr Festival and to add to the competitive landscape for international festivals by establishing a surprising number of them himself.¹⁰

Robert Ponsonby succeeded him as Festival Director from 1956 to 1960 and, in addition to the problems of competition and political interference which had begun

¹⁰ These included City of London 1962, Brighton 1967, Windsor 1969, Hong Kong 1973, Malvern 1977, Bath Festival in 1948 and Commonwealth Arts Festival in 1965 held in London, Glasgow, Cardiff and Liverpool.

to loom, he began to experience financial problems as the rising costs of opera and orchestral concerts were not matched by the static grants from Edinburgh Corporation. The price of his successful negotiation of an increase in grant to £25,000 in October 1955 was that the number of councillors on the Edinburgh Festival Council (EFC) was increased to 50% and to six council members on the Executive Committee. This political jockeying for power within the Festival Council and Committee was to become a familiar feature of the governance of the Festival. Bing's initial financial strategy of relying on support from governments abroad to subsidise the international programme also created difficulties for Ponsonby. He was mortified when prestigious companies such as La Scala and Stuttgart State Opera, whose governments had paid large subsidies for them to come to the Festival, found inadequate facilities at the theatres in Edinburgh. He resigned in 1960 because of his frustration with 'the parsimonious city fathers who were wearily slow to provide performance facilities worthy of the international artists who were to participate' (Ponsonby 2009:2). He also felt that he 'could no longer live with the financial pinch or the indifference, sometimes approaching hostility, of some of the civic authorities' (Ponsonby 2009:2). As Festival Director he was defeated by the problems of negotiating relationships with the city, of a poor venue infrastructure and of relying on a funding strategy of partnership with governments abroad.

When Lord Harewood took over in 1961 he inherited the emerging political, cultural and financial problems and also had the task of shepherding the EIF through the early years of the sixties, a time of particular cultural turbulence in which, critics argue, the festivals played a significant part:

Together, the Edinburgh festivals and other cultural ventures located in Edinburgh provided an important nursery and laboratory for many of the individuals and ideas symbolic of 'the sixties'. A number of the links that formed that motif of 'cultural revolution' - and in particular the London based counterculture - were established in Edinburgh in the early years of the decade. (Bartie in ed. Dubinsky et al 2009:209)

When he took over, Harewood viewed the Scots as ‘carping killjoys’, and felt that the programme needed to regain its festivity. He wanted the Festival to be adventurous and to explore new forms, new methods and new works (Miller 1996:185 -191), an artistic vision which suited the cultural experimentation and challenging of artistic and social boundaries in the US, the UK and Europe which characterised his time as Festival Director. A particularly Scottish aspect of this cultural turbulence came to the fore in 1962 at the Writers’ Conference which was part of the EIF programme and had, as its themes: censorship; the difficulties of the contemporary Scottish scene and the conflict of the modern writer. It brought together an impressive programme of international writers including Norman Mailer, Henry Miller, Mary McCarthy and William Burroughs and Scottish writers including Hugh MacDiarmid, David Daiches, Edwin Morgan and Alexander Trocchi. Conflict emerged in furious confrontations between the Scots, in particular the well known Scottish Nationalist and Communist, Hugh MacDiarmid, who accused the conference of promoting ‘sexual perversion and the vicious habits of beatniks and layabouts’ (Bartie 2006:147) and the little known and much younger Scot and internationalist, Alexander Trocchi. Trocchi argued that the themes were about issues of identity which young American and French writers were tackling much better than those in Britain, particularly those in Scotland. McMillan (2000) draws attention to this tension between Scottishness, Britishness and internationalism for which the festivals and The Traverse provided creative platforms during these years. Bartie’s work suggests that the EIF was important in spear-heading new and subversive art forms and ideas and she links the debates at the Writers’ Conference and the Drama Conference which followed in 1963 with the ‘prophetic utterances’ of William Burroughs and Alexander Trocchi at the later iconic poetry event at the Albert Hall in London in 1965 when the Beat poets came to Britain (Bartie (2006:146).

The conflict between internationalism and Scottishness was particularly clear in the reception of an event at the Drama Conference. This featured an *avant garde* theatrical sequence, or ‘Happening’, which Bartie suggests was the first one of its kind in the UK. It involved a naked woman being wheeled across a gallery above the stage (very swiftly). Although Sheila Colvin, who was present, noted in

interview on 10 October 2009 that most of the people there hardly noticed what happened the event caused predictable outrage in the local press. Bartie (2006:185) gives a detailed account of the reactions of the Church of Scotland and the media to this event which caused banner headlines ‘Godlessness and Dirt’ in the *Scottish Daily Express* and accusations that the EIF was bringing ‘obscenity and degradation by perverts from other countries’. Objectors questioned Edinburgh Corporation’s funding of a Festival that was now being used ‘to give moral decadence to the nation’ and a Reverend Morrison launched a campaign to have Harewood sacked as Festival Director in *The Daily Express* (Bartie 2006:186).

While unruffled by the cultural contestations of the programme, Harewood was disturbed by the escalation of moves by Edinburgh Corporation to gain control of the Festival Council. As the price for an increase in the Corporation’s contribution from £25,000 to £50,000, Miller (1996:55) describes how a Councillor Williamson proposed that the Festival should be taken over and run by the Corporation and that ‘the present rather arty crafty collection of people on the Society’ should be replaced. While this was resisted, the Festival Council of 45 members was reduced to 21 and a majority of town councilors was maintained. A further aspect of the struggle for power was that the Corporation instituted an investigation into the Society’s administration and commissioned a firm of professional management consultants to examine the EFS’s procedures. Harewood describes how Urwick, Orr and partners sent a ‘tormentor’ who grilled the Edinburgh manager for ‘13 hours a day’ (Harewood 1981:186). This appears to be the first government commissioned report into the operation of the EIF, a strategy which has become an important tool of cultural policy in later years. This first official report came up with few criticisms and recommended a significant transfer of executive power from the Festival Council to the Festival Director, who would now be responsible for all aspects of the Festival organisation.

The administrative structure of the EIF was then established as one of ‘power-control’ with the Festival Director at the top of a pyramid shaped organisation which is then influenced by that individual’s perceptions, beliefs and choices as leader (Lawrence & Lorsch 1967). This appeared a logical way of managing a festival but, with the Festival Director of the EIF based in London, there was the

potential for increasing friction between the environment in Scotland and the individual with the power, particularly as that environment became more complex and politicised (Cornelissen 2004:148). As a consequence of the changes recommended in the report, Harewood began to focus attention on improving the administration of the Festival. He had noted that the festival staff in Edinburgh were badly paid and tried to get their conditions improved. He up-graded the former Secretary, based at the Edinburgh office, to an Administrator post responsible to the Festival Director and appointed a new Business Manager to undertake sales and marketing (Miller 1996:63). While Harewood made these efforts towards improving the organisation, there continued to be tensions between his conception of the Festival and that of the Corporation. He was known for his cultural vision and his interest in and enjoyment of the prestigious artists he brought to Edinburgh but his memoir records his mortification at the parsimonious hospitality of Edinburgh Corporation. While it hosted a party for artists twice a week during the Festival, it did so 'on an exiguous scale. Buns and cheap white wine were the order of the day and the faces of Yugoslav and Russian visitors, let alone Americans, faced with this fare had to be seen to be believed' (Harewood 1981:188). He records that his response, as he had a cook, was to give at least two parties a week himself.

His period of office was cut short and the drama of his exit reflected the social and political tensions of the times. In December 1964, the Lord Provost announced Harewood's resignation. The Lord Provost had been informed that Harewood had a child born outside his marriage and feared that press speculation about it would harm The Festival (Miller 1996:63). Advised by Lord Cameron, Harewood provided the Lord Provost with a letter of resignation to be used 'when the moment came' because he was aware that, at his appointment, councillors were worried about 'how they might go about it if they wanted to get rid of me' because of his relationship with the Queen (Harewood 1981:190). Although he did not want to leave in 1964, he accepted the Lord Provost's action and agreed to plan and execute the 1965 Festival before his departure. In the event there were no press reports about his affair until 1967 and he was effectively 'sacked for adultery' as he later described it to Drummond (Drummond 2000:220). Despite what was

happening in the theatres, the old morality still had a grip on the institutions, particularly in Scotland. In 1981, when Harewood's memoir was published, an article in the *Evening News* on 14 November by Max McAuslane, commenting on this incident, remarked 'In London perhaps, such conduct might be condoned, but not in Edinburgh' (Edinburgh Central Library ML.38E, Volume 3).

Although in many ways Harewood exemplified the gentlemanly pursuit of artistic excellence as a good in itself, as discussed in Chapter Two, he met the cultural challenges of the time and his programming reflected innovation and change. John Drummond, who became Festival Director in 1979, said of him that he 'opened up the festival to all kinds of new ideas from contemporary music to the arts of India. The Harewood legacy was constantly in my mind when I was Director, and I am still convinced that he was the best of us all' (Drummond 2000:220). He also, through his attention to administration and marketing, began to move the organisation of the Festival from the domain of the amateur to a more professional operation.

Peter Diamand took over in 1966. Described as being 'like an Edinburgh national monument, difficult, windswept but immensely prestigious' (Jack 1990) and, notwithstanding counter culture and the excitements of the sixties, he wanted to continue programming grand opera and the best international high art. However, he faced mounting disruption and change within his major stakeholders and financial difficulties which challenged his cultural ambitions. By 1967, the EIF was facing an estimated deficit of £72,000. In July of that year Edinburgh Corporation cut the grant for 1968 from £75,000 to £50,000 and Diamand questioned how he could maintain international standards and whether 'he should in fact programme at all for 1969' (Miller 1996:73). The Corporation addressed the lack of adequate funding by commissioning a report on a possible Appeal for Funds for the Festival from the business community, thus inaugurating the idea of encouraging sponsorship and partnership with the commercial sector. However, EFS Minutes on 1 November 1967 record that Hooker, Craigmyle and Co Ltd. reported a very unpromising situation as all the businesses and industrialists targeted had refused to offer support. The report stated that the companies approached viewed the Festival as a concern of the Corporation; noted that the Corporation was not held in very high regard because of recent increases in rates for shopkeepers and

reported that companies considered the Festival too highbrow. It also reported complaints about the Festival Club which attracted 'young bloods' only interested in late night drinking (EFS Minutes 1 November 1967). It thus appeared that the Corporation was not the right body to negotiate relationships with local businesses.

The Corporation's management of venues was also a continuing problem. The Empire Theatre was being converted from a Bingo Hall and The King's Theatre was for sale. That the Corporation did attempt to improve this situation is evidenced by a letter from the Lord Provost written in March 1965 to Jennie Lee, the UK Minister for the Arts in response to her White Paper early in 1965, 'A Policy for the Arts: the First Steps', which renewed state commitment to subsidizing the arts and encouraged local authorities to get involved. In his letter, the Lord Provost, alert to the possibilities of partnership, invited her to the opening of the 1965 festival and further mentioned that 'Our new theatre will quite certainly cost £2 million. It would be encouraging if the Government gave us £1million'.¹¹ However, while the Lord Provost met with Jennie Lee and Lord Goodman about the development of the Lyceum site in 1967 he obtained no cash. Meanwhile a special Council Meeting had to be called in 1966 because there were no venues for opera or ballet for the 1967 Festival and Diamand faced the difficulty that while 'the Festival is subsidized from abroad' (Crawford 1997:86) the situation with venues for the international companies who came was even worse than in 1947.

Also in 1967, a fundamental change came when the EIF's other major stakeholder ceased to be ACGB and became the Scottish Arts Council (SAC), which was established as a separate organisation. This could have presented an opportunity for renewed exploration of what might constitute a specifically Scottish culture, since the establishment of a new body seemed to imply a prior lack of this kind of space for discussion. However, SAC's initial actions were practical and it responded to demands for change by re-calibrating its remit and criteria as it came under pressure from smaller Scottish communities in the Highlands and Islands and the Borders, who complained that the majority of its resources were concentrated

¹¹ Letter dated 4th March 1965 a copy is in the CEC Minutes of the Edinburgh Festival Society files 1960-1965 held in Edinburgh City Archives.

on professional arts organisations operating in the Central Belt. Rather than exploring ideas, SAC began to develop strategies aimed at extending its service and support for the arts throughout Scotland and to explore the possibility of working in partnership with local authorities. This new sense of direction was indicated in 1974 when it appointed consultant Anthony Phillips to carry out an Enquiry and advise on how to co-ordinate SAC's regional development policy with local government reorganisation and to achieve a 'coherent framework of participation' (Phillips 1977). This meant that it became more difficult for an organisation like the EIF, with its international remit, to be considered a priority when Scottish companies like 7:84 were making arguments for support to tour Scottish theatre in Scotland. So began a tension, which was to continue throughout SAC's existence, between support for the high arts through international companies like the Festival and national companies like the Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Opera and Scottish Ballet (which were taken into direct support by the Scottish Executive in 2006) and support for more Scottish and more community based work and for Gaelic arts.

A further destabilizing blow came in 1975 when local authority re-organisation meant that Edinburgh Corporation disappeared. Two new local authorities were created to replace it, Edinburgh District Council (EDC) and Lothian Regional Council (LRC), with the arrangement that both would participate on an equal basis in the financing and management of the Festival. However, Miller (1996:87) describes how the Festival became a kind of 'political football' as the two new authorities locked horns because EDC had a Conservative majority and LRC was staunchly Labour. Within the Festival Council, where the two local councils held a combined majority, they always voted against each other and, during 1977-78, it was unclear whether they would honour their agreements to fund the Festival equally as they wrestled over Rate Support Grants and other issues. A final blow was that, after continual delays in coming to an agreement, the Government withdrew its promise to pay half the cost of an opera house and EDC 'through lack of initiative had lost almost £10 million government subsidy' (Miller 1996).

It was during this difficult time, and possibly because of the difficulties, that the first economic impact study of the EIF was commissioned by LRC and the Scottish

Tourist Board. Crawford (1997) suggests that the report was commissioned by the local authority with little faith that there was in fact any significant economic impact. However the report confounded LRC by showing that: ‘visitors in 1976 spent £3.7 million of which £1 million remained in the city as income to local traders. A return of £3.7 million for investment of £190,000 in 1976’ (Crawford 1997:125). It does not seem to have had any galvanizing effect on the local authority at the time but is a precursor of the influential impact studies of later years which are discussed in the case study chapters.

This prolonged period of disruption and re-organisation of major stakeholders meant that there were many new pressures and delicate negotiations required of the Festival Director and his team. Drummond identifies the emergence of a growing mismatch between Diamand’s view of his role and the new roles which it was becoming important for the Festival Director to play: ‘In public he was taciturn and withdrawn, hating the promotional demands of the job. In private he was witty, passionate and wonderful company’ (Drummond 2000:221). Diamand’s final programme in 1978 featured Pina Bausch’s Tanztheater Wuppertal in its first visit to the UK, indicating that the contemporary and the challenging was now a valued aspect of the Festival in a way that would have been unthinkable during the Bing years. However, Bing, Hunter, Ponsonby, Harewood and Diamand were Festival Directors who brought international arts to Edinburgh but engaged very little in the political and cultural life of the city outwith festival time. Their priority was international culture and they did not have a strategic approach to addressing the issues which had emerged as a result of political change in Scotland or in the UK.

3.3 Transition - 1979 - 1991

Drummond was appointed in 1979 and recognised that the distance Diamand had maintained from Edinburgh and its affairs was no longer a viable way to run the Festival. He knew that the Festival Director needed to be more of a presence in Edinburgh both politically and socially and he was keen to engage with the locals and to ‘placate that element among the city fathers who, ignoring that the festival brought millions of pounds into the city, begrudged the niggardly contribution they made to its finances’ (Ponsonby 2009:106). Drummond’s initial strategy was to

wage a charm offensive of talks, lectures and after dinner speeches in Edinburgh to persuade its citizens to be more receptive to the Festival. He also saw the advantages of creating bridges between the Festival and The Fringe and initiated the beginning of co-operation between the festivals by promoting associated events which would bring in younger audiences (Ponsonby 2009:108). He was the first (and only) Festival Director who was a Scot and he wanted the Festival to involve itself more in Scotland and Scottish life and to include more Scottish events. However he was frustrated by his perception that 'Scotland had neither opera nor ballet companies and only one orchestra - by no means among the best -musicians and actors had mostly sought their luck in the South' (Drummond 2000:219). Dudley Edwards suggests that his interest in the issue of Scottish national identity can be seen in his promotion of the Georgian Rustaveli Company so that Scotland would have the opportunity 'to translate its own self-consciousness into identification with other cultural unities striving to assert their national identities against the arrogance of alien metropolis' (Dudley Edwards 1991:53).

While Drummond began to move the aesthetic agenda of the Festival in new directions, creating a Diaghilev theme for his first Festival which brought together opera, ballet, drama and the visual arts, he was not able to solve what had become ingrained problems. The situation with venues remained desperate and Ponsonby (2009) notes that foreign governments would no longer subsidise visits to Edinburgh as their major opera and ballet companies refused to perform in the venues. One of Drummond's creative solutions was to programme the Royal Ballet with its travelling tent, the Big Top, at the Meadows. However, this brought its own difficulties with local procedures and processes and his autobiography *Tainted by Experience* records how his assistant:

went through the tortures of the damned to get it agreed. The licence to use it was insultingly delivered to us only a few minutes before the royal car swept up to the entrance on the opening night. 'We'll keep these whippersnappers in their place', I overheard one official say. (Drummond 2000:230)

Drummond's experience illustrates the difficulties of being on the outside of the personalities and power relationships which operate within local government. In an effort to improve the organisation of the Festival he continued Harewood's focus on creating better administrative arrangements and centralised the design and printing of publicity in Edinburgh. But he also got impatient: 'while I initially had sympathy for the Edinburgh staff's difficulty in understanding the import of what was going on, they seemed unwilling to learn and treated us as if we were certainly irresponsible and probably dangerous' (Drummond 2000:232). He was obliged to address the question of whether the Festival should continue to be run from the office in London, which was beginning to become an administrative and political issue. His detailed report submitted to the Festival Society in April 1979 concluded that, although the organisation of the Festival might be done from Edinburgh, the artistic programme demanded his presence elsewhere, 'anywhere else, in fact' (Drummond 2000:235). Although he tried to spend more time in Edinburgh:

I never really felt welcome in the city and came to dread evenings alone. I never got used to the intrusiveness of other diners in Edinburgh who would come over and tell me what was wrong with me and the festival at every turn. (Drummond 2000:236)

His memoir indicates that he was also concerned about the growing demands which SAC was facing 'from Orkney to the Borders' and the implications this would have on its support for the EIF. When SAC's review *The Next Five Years: A Programme for Change and Development*, was published in 1984, it confirmed his fears, stating that a priority would be to increase the availability and accessibility of the arts *throughout* Scotland. The only reference to the EIF was disappointing for Drummond:

at this difficult time, it must necessarily place a higher priority upon the support of indigenous arts activity and on the provision of the arts throughout the year than upon a three week festival in Edinburgh. The Council also believes that the Festival makes a significant contribution to the local economy and that this should be reflected in the financial support for the festival from those who derive such benefit. Accordingly

it intends to offer no increase to the Edinburgh Festival for the financial years 1986/87 and 1987/88, thereby saving an estimated £40,000 over two years. (SAC 1984:19)

Audience surveys showed that over 90% of the audience did live in the city and could or did benefit from the Festival so Drummond tried to reach the Edinburgh that he knew the EIF depended on. However he was defeated by attitudes he felt he could not change: 'Despite the close involvement of prominent citizens and local grandees the idea took hold that somehow the Festival was imposed on an unwilling city [...] they seemed to feel that the festival was a tiresome, expensive irrelevance' (Drummond 2000:219). He was also frustrated by new demands from local government which reflected a growing emphasis on partnership and a 'value for money' approach. He complained that 'Government policy increasingly insisting on multi-source funding - and the rise of sponsorship meant that we had to spend a great deal of time courting potential sponsors' and resented having to spend his time chasing after money rather than organizing an arts festival (Drummond 2000:289). Ponsonby (2009) points out that a further source of irritation for Drummond was that EDC was unwilling to assist with fundraising for the Festival yet found £13 million for the 1986 Commonwealth Games. He suggests that it was this and the embarrassment of trying to persuade international companies to bring their work to venues which were totally inadequate which contributed to Drummond's decision to resign in 1983.

Drummond experienced the emergence of new economic and political pressures from stakeholders which began to change the role of Festival Director. He understood that more time should be spent negotiating partnerships and working at relationships in Scotland but had little patience with, or training for, these new aspects of the job. During his tenure he achieved a broader balance of art forms and brought the Festival closer to The Fringe. He also started the Edinburgh International Book Festival. His autobiography expresses a spirited and amusingly combative personality not entirely able to adapt to the new environment in which the Festival now had to operate.

When Frank Dunlop was appointed in 1984 it appeared to be for the political skills which he could bring to the post of Festival Director. He was already known to the Festival organisers as he had brought theatre productions to The Fringe and Miller describes how he originally volunteered to talk to Councillors about what he thought was wrong with the Festival and how it could be re-imagined in a way that was more ‘for everybody’ (Miller 1996:114). He was convincing enough to be offered the job of Festival Director and accepted the offer, although he may have regretted this when the size of the deficit he inherited was revealed at £175,000 (Miller 1996:115). By May 1984 his political skills were needed as the Conservatives, who had appointed him, were ousted by the Labour group in the local elections. The Labour group embarked on an immediate change of policy on the Festival which they launched at a conference on *The Future of the Arts in Edinburgh* in 1984 to which Dunlop was not invited although the speakers included John McGrath, Artistic Director of 7:84, Timothy Mason, Director of SAC and Tony Banks, MP and former Chair of the Recreation Committee of the GLC (NLS Acc 11719 Box 172, Proceedings of a Conference on 18 August 1984). John McGrath called for a new definition of art in which ‘making art popular and making popular art are drawn closer together’ and Timothy Mason noted that SAC’s grant to EIF of £437K was more than the total ACGB provides for all festivals. The Chair of the Recreation Committee, Mark Lazarowicz of CEDC criticised what he saw as the elitism of the Festival and threatened that the grant could be withdrawn if the Festival did not ‘get rid of its stuffed shirt image’ (ibid). Councillor Kerevan later went into print declaring that ‘there is an arts establishment in Edinburgh and we declare war on it [...] we will abolish it; we will democratise it’ (Miller 1996:116). Dunlop’s reaction to this aggressive stance was to meet the Councillors and to convince them that he was on their side politically and would make the Festival more popular (Jack 1990:32). While Dunlop was able to resolve things locally, the Labour group’s pronouncements drew predictable accusations of philistinism in the UK press, an extreme example of which was Rodney Milnes, writing in *The Spectator*:

What may happen in Edinburgh has less to do with socialism than with John Knoxery, xenophobia and foam-flecked, prurient hatred of quality and

pleasure, all British characteristics from time immemorial but seen at their most virulent, in the Scottish capital. (Milnes 1984)

In spite of Milnes' fears that the Festival would be limited to 'ethnic street theatre (and Scottish ethnic at that)', Dunlop's first festival was critically and financially successful and achieved a surplus of £75,000 (Miller 1996). However, while he introduced more populist entertainments like jazz, jugglers and circus, his more overt efforts to reach 'the people' were not so successful. A tent in Pilrig Park - The Dome - programmed to attract more community based audiences was a failure and lost nearly £59,000 and efforts to bring performers to people on the less advantaged estates were often unsuccessful due to poor organisation and communication (Miller 1996:120).

Dunlop was the first Festival Director to be appointed from the theatre sector and, although he introduced the innovative and successful World Theatre Seasons he was always vulnerable to criticisms that he was not prioritising the music programme:

Edinburgh [...] has become self-satisfied, complacent and parochial. The legendary miserliness of the City Fathers conspired with the insatiable greed of international musicians to seal Edinburgh's lapse into provincialism. Indeed many Edinburgh-watchers have always assumed this was Dunlop's brief, to downgrade the costly musical content of the festival in favour of the cheaper, more flexible dramatic arts. (Canning 1989)

Things also got more difficult politically. Miller describes how the Labour group insisted that all the local authority places on the Festival Council must be held by Labour councillors, who had to toe the party line, and that attempts by the Vice Chair of the Festival Council to break their stranglehold and reduce their number resulted in angry threats to stop the grant and withhold the use of the halls and theatres (Miller 1996:118). As his tenure progressed Dunlop was also thwarted by a peculiarity in Scottish social, cultural and political life which James Bridie had alluded to when the Festival was first proposed: 'Between the West and the East there is a great gulf fixed. It is difficult for anyone living outside Scotland to

understand the nature of this gulf, but it is nevertheless a fact' (Miller 1996:4). Dunlop was politically astute enough to see the potential benefits of winning the European City of Culture 1990 title and tried to persuade the Councils of Edinburgh and Glasgow to make a joint Scottish bid and gain the profile and advantages it could bring both cities. They refused and Edinburgh was beaten by Glasgow. Dunlop's further suggestion that it might be worth the Festival having a closer relationship with Glasgow during 1990, possibly alternating shows between the two cities, in order to benefit from the visitors for the City of Culture events, also earned strong condemnation by a Conservative District Councillor and he was warned to 'consider his position' (Miller 1996:131).

Further disenchantment came when support for his ambitious three year plan to extend the remit and operations of the Festival began to falter. Sheila Colvin, who was appointed as Associate Director during Dunlop's time and took over when he was ill,¹² confirmed in interview on 10 October 2009 that his dream was that the Festival would offer 'all year round cultural provision from its own producing theatre'. The original plans for the conversion of The Empire into a new Festival Theatre had included offices for the EIF and the expectation that it would, at the very least, provide a free venue for the Festival. Miller reports that support for Dunlop began to fall away when some councilors began to suspect that he was more interested in running the Festival Theatre than the Festival (Miller 1996:134) and Colvin confirms that Dunlop was bitterly disappointed when the final phase of works did not even include plans for Festival offices. His relationship with the LDC had deteriorated and he refused to continue for the further year which was offered and left when his contract ended. On the eve of his departure, he accused the Labour leaders of 'major interference' and anti-Festival attitudes during his years in office (ibid:137). Ironically, his departure coincided with a considerably reduced Labour majority on LDC, which itself no longer had a controlling interest on the Festival Council (ibid:137) so that the political situation which the new Festival Director would face was helpfully re-calibrated. His own politics had helped him to deal with the very difficult local authority situation in Edinburgh with more success

¹² The only time a woman has been Festival Director of EIF.

than previous Festival Directors might have had, but his loss of interest in diplomacy as his term progressed stirred up controversy and damaged relationships with stakeholders. His final 1991 Festival incurred a deficit of £198,000.

Both Drummond and Dunlop presided over a time when the EIF was subjected to increasingly political expectations and demands. In response, Drummond had attempted to engage more fully with local political and cultural life in Edinburgh and to up-grade and professionalise the operation of the EIF and Dunlop had nurtured ambitions to develop a more year-round presence and more diverse audiences through a range of new programming. Both were frustrated in their cultural ambitions because of difficulties with local politics and cultural attitudes. Sheila Colvin suggests that, because the EIF Festival Directors ‘were not part of the city, or part of the arts network,’ they therefore left little legacy compared to the directors of other festivals. However things were to change.

3.4 A new relationship 1992 - 2009

When Brian McMaster was appointed in 1992 he came to live in Edinburgh and closed the London office. He therefore became a presence in Edinburgh and in the work of administering the Festival in a way no previous Festival Director had been and re-oriented the EIF to a position of cultural centrality and potential power in Edinburgh. He brought with him a skill set which was new and initiated significant changes in the way the festival operated. He expected to engage with local and national governments in the formation of cultural policy, or even to lead, in a strategic way that no previous Festival Directors had thought about, or, as he suggested, in interview on 15 November 2011, he ‘thought it more clearly.’ He spoke of his great belief in the Festival and his conviction that he should ‘live the responsibility’ and use the freedom his position as Festival Director brought to implement the strategies he believed necessary for it to thrive.

While McMaster’s personal style was quieter than his predecessors (Miller 1996) he appears to have been particularly effective at working behind the scenes, preferring to cultivate relationships and operate through meetings and discussions with politicians and civil servants rather than engaging in more overt cultivation of

sponsors and stakeholders. Throughout his tenure he welcomed UK Ministers responsible for Culture, including Chris Smith and Tessa Jowell, to the Festival, both to see shows and to talk. In a context where the Scottish Executive appeared slow to follow up the aspirations of the First Minister's speech in 2003, which spoke of 'the importance and centrality of cultural activity to all aspects of our lives', McMaster facilitated discussions with key people. The 2004 DCMS publication *Government and The Value of Culture* spoke of the importance of 'investigating, questioning and celebrating what culture actually does in and of itself' (Jowell 2004:8) and McMaster worked to engage Scottish politicians with Jowell's vision and bridge what Baker suggested in an interview on 8 June 2010, appeared to be 'a mismatch in terms of cultural policy between England and Scotland'.

McMaster's approach of developing positive relationships was also focussed on stakeholders and this new approach to partnership brought the EIF into a positive financial position. By 1994 EDC had increased its grant from £600,000 in 1989 to £950,000, LRC was putting in £350,000 and SAC increased its grant to £735,000. However another local government re-organisation in May 1995 meant that EDC and LRC were abolished and a new body, City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), was established which, initially, appeared unlikely to make up the total funding of the two previous councils.

In the same year SAC conducted a *Major Review of the Edinburgh International Festival* which indicated a number of new directions for the Festival and had a significant impact on future strategies. Although the Review Team found that the EIF was 'a dynamic, well managed organisation with clear objectives' and it congratulated the Director and his team on 'programming, managing and promoting a truly unique international event of quality' (SAC 1995:1) it also made a number of recommendations which indicated new, more business oriented, directions in which cultural policy in the UK had begun to move. These included: an update of the 1990 Economic Impact Assessment conducted as part of the Edinburgh Festivals Study by Scotinform for the Scottish Tourist Board; the production of a Business Plan; an extension of the Education post and the development of a new Communications and Marketing strategy to attract Glasgow audiences. It emphasised the importance of working more closely with the Scottish Tourist Board, Edinburgh Tourist Board

and Lothian and Edinburgh Enterprise to ‘ensure the development of an Edinburgh Festival Marketing Strategy in relation to tourism’. It also made recommendations intended to develop broader partnerships which included the appointment of an ‘external affairs person’ separate from the marketing function, and that ‘cultivation events’ should be used to attract more new sponsors (SAC 1995:4-6). These recommendations expressed a policy direction which was intended to develop strategies which would extend the role and impact of the Festival. The case study chapters examine how far these recommendations influenced changes within the Festival organisation. The Review also addressed issues of funding. It compared the EIF to other European Festivals¹³ and, while it concluded that Edinburgh was unique, vying only with Salzburg for the title of lead international arts festival, it pointed out that ‘its budget is small in comparison with the other festivals, as is the level of public support. Ticket prices are nearly the cheapest and yet percentage of income from ticket sales is high’. In many ways this Review served as a model for future research studies on the EIF and the Edinburgh festivals which have been important to the development of cultural policy in Edinburgh and which are discussed in the case study chapters.

McMaster brought a team of experts in Marketing and Public Affairs with him and initiated a re-structuring of the organisation which established a new phase in the management of the Festival. He also commissioned an exuberant re-design of the Festival logo.



Figure 1. Festival Logo 1992 (the blown-up cherub)

¹³ Aix-en-Provence, Avignon, Erlin, Florence, Holland, Munich, Paris, Salzburg, Vienna.

Extensive research undertaken to create the design signalled a new consciousness of the importance of arts marketing and an 'early adopter' approach to the process of branding which is further discussed in Chapter Five.

Significant policy initiatives taken during McMaster's time as Festival Director include the CEC's commission of the reports, *Festivals and the City: The Edinburgh Festivals Strategy* (Graham Devlin Associates 2001) and *Edinburgh's year round festivals 2004-2005: economic impact study* (SQW 2005) commissioned by CEC, Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothian (SEEL), EventScotland and VisitScotland. The economic impact study estimated that the Edinburgh Festivals, as a whole, generated £184 million revenue for the Scottish economy, of which £135 million directly accrued to Edinburgh and the Lothians. These were significant steps in establishing Edinburgh's lead in exploiting the potential of festivals and integrating tourism and business agencies into the cultural agenda and the case study examines the EIF's role in supporting and guiding the research.

McMaster's artistic credentials were re-assuring to traditionalists since he had come from Welsh Opera. However due to the deficit he inherited from Dunlop he had no capacity for an expensive opera season when he arrived. He therefore built his first festival programme on theatre by the Scottish writers, Taylor and Barker, and thus attracted hostility from the London critics for this concentration on writers who could be considered 'local':

Edinburgh first gained its reputation as the greatest arts festival in the world not by rescuing obscure Scotsmen from well-deserved obscurity but by bringing the best international arts and theatre to Britain. I shall miss Edinburgh but I am simply not interested in witnessing one more stage of its horrible and relentless and, yes, tragic transformation into a minor, local event. (Januszczak 1992)

Nonetheless, McMaster's first Festival wiped out the financial deficit and by 1994 the Festival Theatre was completed and, with its huge stage and state of the art technology, he was able to programme grand opera. He celebrated the opening with a twelve hour *Fidelio* day which broke all box office records and was able to

maximize use of the new theatre for large scale international dance programmes since, at this time, Sadlers Wells was being refurbished (Miller 1996). However these new facilities put Edinburgh into more direct competition with other international festivals like Salzburg thus foregrounding the distinct disadvantage that Salzburg was funded at £28 million compared to Edinburgh's £4.9 million (Crawford 1997:245).

During McMaster's time cultural policy in the UK began to reflect creative industries language and ideas which also permeated the policy environment in Scotland and could have benefited the festivals. These were spelt out in the 1998 *Creative Industries Mapping Document* produced by the new Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) which presented the creative industries as a key growth area for the UK economy and advocated better collaboration between the arts, academia and business in order to develop effective strategies to deliver this. The idea was received with some enthusiasm by arts constituencies in England and collaborative creative industries projects were developed through the Regional Development Agencies and Regional Arts Councils which brought new funding for arts based initiatives, often through the newly available European Union schemes. In Scotland such collaboration was immediately problematic as there was no similar regional structure and the absolute division between the remits of the national enterprise agencies responsible for business development and the cultural remit of SAC meant collaboration would require negotiation. As the enterprise agencies appeared unwilling either to engage in significant collaborative creative industries strategies with either SAC or Scottish Screen or to cede responsibility or resources for them to these agencies¹⁴ there was no policy recognition at a national level of the fact that the Edinburgh festivals were successful creative industries initiatives which generated profile and economic benefit for Edinburgh and Scotland. They therefore continued to be funded from local Edinburgh culture budgets and SAC but the instrumental tenor of creative industries discourse nonetheless began to be

¹⁴ As late as 2010 there was no reference to creative industries or the creative economy on the Scottish Enterprise website. While the new body Creative Scotland was tasked with promoting the creative economy, no additional funds were given to fulfil this remit.

influential in Scotland and McMaster needed to respond to the new agendas which were emerging as a result.

These new agendas, and the phenomenon of ‘festivalisation,’ which was also emerging during this time, was, and continues to be, a subject of concern to other practitioners (Stromberg 2008, Klaic in Autissier 2009). At a Conference *On Festivals* in the EIF 1997 Festival on 23 August, European Festival Director, Ritsaert ten Cate spoke of the dangers of this more competitive and commercialised landscape and suggested that it brought fundamental change to the notion of festival. However, he felt it could be approached with creative optimism, ‘I don’t offer the total demise of the idea of the festival as a threat. It’s more of a promise, and it’s something to be worked with rather than to be worked against’. McMaster’s approach was to establish a more professional administration within the EIF, initiate strategic thinking in the operation of the Festival as an organisation and institute a more effective approach to developing the political relationships which had become important to running a successful Festival. He contributed to the direction of cultural policy in Edinburgh by actively supporting and guiding the articulation of the cultural partnership policy which CEC initiated in 1999 and he worked to improve collaboration and partnership, including the difficult task of developing co-operation with the rival festivals in Edinburgh - a strategy which was to become a unique and successful feature of Edinburgh’s cultural policy. His approach to the Festival Director role was to find ways to create opportunities for the EIF from environmental factors and profit from them (Child 1972) and also to operate on the assumption that environments can be influenced (Smircich and Stubbart 1985). He actively used his skills and position to embed the EIF as a leader in the political and social environment of Edinburgh.

When he left the EIF he continued to be influential in developing cultural policy in the UK as he was commissioned by the UK Secretary of State for Culture, James Purnell, to review how public sector support for the arts can encourage excellence, risk-taking and innovation. In *Supporting Excellence in the Arts - From Measurement to Judgement* (2008) his report challenged the ‘target setting’ approach to assessing excellence in the arts, which had by then become standard practice. McMaster argued for the profound value of art and culture in itself to be

recognised and offered a definition of culture: ‘Excellent culture takes and combines complex meanings, gives us new insights and new understandings of the world around us and is relevant to every single one of us’ (McMaster 2008:9). His proposal for a complete change of direction and his vision of a new Renaissance in the arts was welcomed by Purnell and by Jeremy Hunt, the Shadow Culture Secretary, who was quoted in *The Guardian* saying ‘Many will question why it talks about a second arts Renaissance when 194 respected arts organisations are having their funding cut’ (Brown 2008:9). However, the economic downturn which came on the heels of his report meant that McMaster’s proposals were not actioned, further cuts to arts organisations ensued and the instrumental assessment of the arts he had argued against remained in place. McMaster was invited to advise on the Board which set up the Manchester International Festival in 2009, often cited in the press as a competitor to the EIF, and continues to contribute to cultural policy making in the UK.

Jonathan Mills became Festival Director in 2006 and inherited a deficit of £800,000, the largest so far. He was also the first person appointed to the post of Festival Director who was not European and this attracted extraordinary outbursts of hostility from London critic, Norman Lebrecht, Arts Editor of *The Evening Standard*. In August 2008 *The Scotsman* ran a piece by him which made unfavourable comparisons with Salzburg and then went on:

When Mills was appointed director in March 2006, I warned that the inexperienced Australian would arrive naked at the high table with few cards to play. He has, in difficult circumstances, made a decent figleaf of his first two years, but the EIF has drifted in that time from budgetary difficulties to full-blown existential crisis [...] Edinburgh is barely in the league of premier festivals and falling fast. (Lebrecht 2008:24)

Mills did bring a very different perspective:

Partnerships, strategies and the question of Scotland need to be mediated through the prism of what it means to be international. In 1947 it was radical to bring the Vienna Philharmonic here. What has changed in the

world, what are the shifting emphases and the geopolitical forces playing in the world are the questions which must be asked before starting to programme. When Brian took over there was no world wide web, no human genome programme, the economies of India and China were not as potent as today, global warming was discussed only in scientific circles but not part of the vernacular. (Jonathan Mills, Interview 3 February 2010)

Mills introduced a new understanding of the global landscape in which the EIF is now operating. He also brought a considered pragmatic approach to the fact that the EIF was, as he noted in the above interview on 3 February 2010, 'the worst funded festival in Europe'. His response was to adopt the artistic strategy of curation rather than commissioning, describing his role as that of constructing a journey, exploring ideas and concepts which reflect the world we live in now and which everyone can share. He explained that his way of working was to create a unique programme for each Festival in which all the productions fitted together 'to bring things into relationship with each other' (ibid). Mills brought real change to the EIF, both through his programming and through changing its organisational structure and strategic direction. In the same interview he noted that he was aware of the disruptive aspects of change: 'if I hadn't read the scenario sensitively I could have blown things apart more extensively but I have been careful and judicious about achieving the shift'. Mills' approach illustrates a deft avoidance of what Bilton has referred to as 'blind acts of decisiveness' which may express creativity and innovation but would risk self harm by alienating and disorienting staff and supporters (Bilton 2007:112).

Mills explained that he believes that audiences, critics, stakeholders and staff will respond better to dialogue, discussion and debate and will not all be brought along at the same rate. He noted that he had re-designed the structure of the organisation because he wanted to deliver on new agendas and that he had established a Managing Director post with responsibility for 'curating the organisation' in the same way as he is responsible for curating the programme. This new post has responsibility for managing external affairs as advocated by the 1995 SAC Review. In this way he created capacity for the Festival to develop the delivery of new roles, to cultivate stronger relationships with stakeholders and to

promote new collaborations as well as the ability to respond quickly to emergent issues, whether in the press or with international companies.

He also recognized the potential of advances in technology and the importance of developing strategies to use this potential to reach new and existing audiences in new ways, as well as exploring how to produce new work. In 2013 the theme of his EIF programme will be artist led exploration and appreciation of technology. This direction of travel is supported by Festivals Edinburgh which staged a *Culture Hack Scotland* event in May 2011 with digital developers and designers to create applications and web based tools around the festivals and their audiences, described as ‘a dream playground’ by Jennie Lees, founder of Festbuzz (Miller, *The Herald* on 16 July 2011, p.3). At a workshop for senior staff at the EIF on 12 October 2011, to discuss the future of the festival, staff spoke of changes in performative modes and the potential for different kinds of engagement with audiences both through more intimate and individual encounters in non-conventional venues and by using technology to create different sorts of festival experience. Mills spoke of working with the other Edinburgh festivals to develop new kinds of performance ‘using the landscape of the city’ and there was a discussion was about how to engage fully with the city, with place, using art as intensely and variously as is possible which echoed Festival Director, Rose Fenton’s vision of future festivals which ‘will cast a net of artistic work and co-operative forms over the city’ (Fenton 2008:203).

Interviews with staff indicate that the management culture which he and the Managing Director have fostered within the organisation has encouraged the production and analysis of innovative ideas and demonstrated an understanding of how the work of each member of staff creates value for the organisation as a whole (Bilton 2007:112). The Technical Department expressed this:

We are conscious of setting a standard... As a public body, it wouldn’t be appropriate that for want of effort things aren’t quite right. Whatever the company and the reviews we wouldn’t do anything less for them - we treat all companies the same. The Department is proud of the fact that we work

for the EIF - we present to the highest standards. (John Robb, Interview, 19 January 2010)

In line with the recommendations of the SAC 1995 Review, Mills also oversaw the development of an ambitious three year Business Plan, 2009-2012, which was designed to be both a driver and a flexible tool, open to amendment as conditions changed. It contained the EIF's Mission Statement:

To be the most exciting, innovative and accessible Festival of the performing arts in the world, and thus promote the cultural, educational and economic well-being of the people of Edinburgh and Scotland. (EIF Business Plan 2009-2012: 3)

The Business Plan defined the organisation as one which was working to deliver a number of agendas through partnerships and described strategies for improving its position and achieving more. The Business Plan indicated that the EIF had reached a more appropriate level of funding than in the past and was upbeat and confident that the Festival had achieved a positive balance between income from stakeholders, sponsors and box office.¹⁵ However, when 2009 arrived, the EIF had to negotiate its way through the difficulties of an economic downturn, which included reduced grants from stakeholders and ushered in challenging times for sponsors.

McMaster had opened up new directions for the EIF by engaging with the formulation and direction of cultural policy in Edinburgh. Mills has built on this by facilitating the development of sophisticated partnerships with stakeholders, with Governments, both in Scotland and abroad, and with sponsors. He has also been enthusiastic about attempting to seize new opportunities for the EIF, seeing the potential of gaining Edinburgh a greater involvement with the 2012 Olympic Games in London and the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in order to create profile for the festivals and to attract new audiences to Edinburgh. Mills has used the power control structure to act upon the environment and, through the branding

¹⁵ Income was approximately £9.6 million which was made up of 23% ticket sales, 27% sponsorship and donations and 50% grants from the City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Arts Council.

process and regular staff meetings, to create a vision for the staff which makes sense of events and experiences and encourages action and interaction with the environment. He has adopted an ambassadorial approach to the role of Festival Director and has been highly effective in creating the international partnerships upon which the financing of the programme has traditionally relied and has found ways to extend the benefits to wider Scottish interests. During his time a review of what venue infrastructure was needed was also commissioned but the recommendations of the CEC report *Study of Cultural venues in the city* (Pmp 2007) have not been implemented.

3.4 Summary

The establishment of the EIF in Scotland instigated debate about culture, and as a corollary, Scottish culture, from the beginning. Speaking in Edinburgh in 2010, Joyce McMillan suggested that the EIF acted as a catalyst which began a transformation of Edinburgh from ‘a dowdy provincial city’¹⁶ in the 1940s to an international destination. She described the EIF as ‘opening Scottish artists to a standard and level and variety of work which they could never have seen otherwise’. and of changing political life by ‘opening eyes and ambition’ to the city’s ability to be an international player. McMillan (1988) also describes how the EIF inspired ambitious cultural developments in Scotland, for example The Traverse Theatre, which was set up by artists who wanted to stay in Edinburgh because of the festivals. In this way the EIF initiated more diverse and complex ideas about culture and cultural identity in Scotland and, at the same time encouraged the production of contemporary work which challenged traditional ideas of culture, class and society (Bartie 2009:49). Drummond (2000:236) also notes that the EIF contributed to the environment of enthusiasm and ambition which supported the formation of Scottish Opera, Scottish Ballet and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in the 1980s.

¹⁶ Joyce McMillan. Key note speech for Festivals Edinburgh on 15 July 2010

In its first year the launch of the EIF stimulated the development of what was to become the Fringe, the Film Festival, the Peoples' Festival and the Tattoo. By 2009 Edinburgh was the leading Festival City in the world with twelve international festivals operating year round. These Edinburgh festivals have become a significant feature of Scotland's economy. They have contributed to Edinburgh's transition to a successful service and tourism economy and this has happened in spite of what both Mills, in an interview on 3 February 2010, and McMillan (2010) have described as 'judicious neglect' and 'inertia' on the part of the city authorities. The EIF championed the commissioning of independent research in 2004, 2006 and 2010 which evidenced not only the economic benefits of the festivals but increasingly demonstrated the importance of their social, cultural and environmental benefits and this work has provided vital arguments for cultural investment and influenced the cultural policy and strategies employed by CEC.

The EIF has survived periods of enormous change in Edinburgh and in Scotland which have demanded of its Festival Directors ever more complex skills to deliver a Festival of the highest international standards. The local authority area from which funding for the EIF comes has been completely re-drawn twice. In 1976, SAC made inevitable changes in policy direction when it was established as separate from ACGB. SAC itself was amalgamated into Creative Scotland in 2010. The Scottish Parliament was devolved in 1999 and from this a number of new government policy directions and priorities flowed. Stakeholders and sponsors have also been subject to broader political and economic changes beyond their own control, most recently the global economic downturn in 2008. The role of Festival Director has therefore changed from the days when the role was simply to create the aesthetic for the Festival and cultivate performers. From operating more like artists than managers (and in some cases Festival Directors have been practitioners¹⁷), now, as well as creating an artistic vision for the Festival, the Director must engage with marketing, with creating efficient organisational structures, with making strategic partnerships with governments and must know

¹⁷ Rudolf Bing, Frank Dunlop, Jonathan Mills

how to exploit outside factors which offer new opportunities for the organization including those offered by advances in communications technology.

Festival Directors have had to negotiate a trajectory from the cultural certainties of the post-war years, presided over by Bing, Hunter and Ponsonby, through the social and cultural turbulence of the 1960s and 1970s led by Harewood and Diamand to the buffeting of Drummond and Dunlop as cultural policies were influenced by more political local authority agendas and expectations in the 1980s, reflecting creative industries discourses. In recent years McMaster and Mills have faced a more overtly commercial and competitive international environment in the 1990s and 2000s, combined with devolution and the changes it has brought and continues to bring. They have brought new skills to the burgeoning role of Festival Director which has required an increasing engagement with the development of cultural policy in Edinburgh and Scotland. When McMaster made his innovative move to live in Edinburgh he was told at the time ‘you will win Edinburgh and lose the world’ (McMaster 2008:111). The changing relationship between the local and the global is an important part of the EIF’s story - and in the last two decades its mission, as expressed in the Business Plan 2009-2012, is to win Edinburgh *and* to win the world. The following chapters examine what strategies the EIF has adopted to maintain its lead in a competitive global arena and also to adjust to prevailing government agendas as an important player in the cultural life of Edinburgh and as a cultural ambassador for a new Scotland.

CHAPTER FOUR - RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

My research has been designed to discover new knowledge about the changing role of international arts festivals. The selection of a research design was influenced by the collaborative nature of the project¹⁸ which meant that I had a unique opportunity to study the operation of an international arts festival at close quarters. This allowed me to explore the core questions framed in Chapter One in a practical way, through observation and participation, as well as theoretically, through consulting primary and secondary sources. I based the overall design of the research on the general methodology of organisational research from a sociological perspective through qualitative research methods as described by Brewerton and Millward (2001) and, as part of this design, I chose to use the case study method, as described by Bryman (1995:170) to observe the processes driving the EIF.

The use of a case study as part of the research design was also informed by ethnographic principles of research as defined by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007:1) as ‘an integration of first hand empirical investigation and the theoretical and comparative interpretation of social organisation and culture.’ Schlesinger (1987) also discusses the merits of the use of the ethnographic approach to interrogate the social practices of cultural production, in particular, how careful observation and reflection can contribute to the theoretical goals of the research. The case study was used to maximise the potential for production of knowledge during the course of the collaboration by: studying actions and accounts in everyday contexts; the use of data collected from a range of resources including documents; participant observation, informal conversations and unstructured data collection. It was focused on a single setting and group, allowing in depth study and analysis which interprets meanings of actions and practices and puts them into wider contexts (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:3).

¹⁸ AHRC funded Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA).

It was expected that specific questions and ideas would emerge from experience and affect the collection of data and the priorities of the research focus (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:3) so the design adopted was 'reflexive' (Maxwell 2004) which meant that there was the potential for continued refinement or re-alignment of the core questions throughout the process of research. I also decided to use the two primary research methods simultaneously for most of the project. I had a desk in the EIF offices for the duration of the research and used it to conduct the case study on an average of a day a week over a two year period. The availability of the desk was subject to the Festival's cycle of production and I was therefore able to use it most of the year apart from mid June to mid September when Festival activity was at its height, large numbers of extra staff were employed and space was scarce. During this period I therefore visited the office intermittently to observe the general atmosphere and read press cuttings, attended as many events as possible during the Festival itself and also spent time reading and writing. Throughout the research period I consulted primary archival material and researched secondary historical and theoretical literature and documents. Reading was augmented by attendance at workshops, seminars and a relevant conference to access the latest debates and ideas about festivals. All of these methods had their own requirements and the use of a mixture of them, more or less continuously, meant that I engaged in a number of different research activities in different places, requiring the acquisition of different skills and occupying different time scales. The strategy adopted was to follow the cyclical pattern of the Festival itself, using a variety of methods at different points in the year as I became accustomed to the different stages of the EIF's annual routines.

The problems associated with this strategy were maintaining a framework for the research which allowed a flexibility of approach, direction and interpretation but delivered relevant findings; maintaining a balance between discovery and analysis of historical and theoretical resources and attendance at 'the field' and balancing the acquisition of material through observation and interaction with reflection on its meaning.

A difficulty I had not expected was managing the transition from undertaking 'constructive analysis' to developing a 'critical perspective'. I initially undertook

immersion in the field with the intention of ‘finding out’ without being aware of having any particular theoretical agenda apart from a professional interest in the new roles which the Festival had begun to play and a view that the collaborative relationship implied a responsibility to the host. I was conscious that the EIF is a leading festival and continues to be a high profile achiever and found that the Festival Director was engagingly robust in his views and energetic about the task of bringing what he regarded as challenging new work to Edinburgh. I found that the staff feel privileged to work there and inferred from the careful and alert attention I got that they are particularly careful about guarding the Festival’s image and aware of how to do this (as discussed in Chapter Five). Given the tight cultural networks in Edinburgh and the close attention of the Scottish press, it is understandable that they have developed this awareness. I began to understand that all of the staff were skilled in performing as festival people, it was expected that they would all ‘work the room’ at the many launches and parties as well as achieving in their daily tasks. They were also used to talking to commissioned consultants, although less familiar with a more academic approach.

Because of these factors I tended to engage primarily in constructive analysis during the case study and it was in the writing up period that I was able to develop a more critical perspective on the evidence I had acquired. Once I had established that the EIF had adopted a strategy of accepting new roles in response to a changing cultural policy environment I then began to question the extent to which, in performing these roles, they were in danger of implicitly accepting the assumptions of that policy and what the implications of this might be for the Festival. The question of whether, in absorbing the language of business and the concept of the creative economy because ‘politicians understand it’, there is a danger of art and culture being seen as a commodity rather than a living thing.

The method of writing up follows the logic of the research design. In Chapter Two the theoretical literature which contextualises the study is discussed. Chapter Three provides a history of the establishment of the EIF and the cultural policy context in which it has operated up to 2009 based on archival and secondary resources. Using the core questions posed in Chapter One as a framework, Chapters

Five, Six and Seven present and discuss the material produced by the case study of the organisation from 2009 - 2011.

4.1. The case study method

Brewerton and Millward (2001:53) indicate that the advantages of the case study include: enabling more in depth examination; yielding information which may provide new leads or raise questions that otherwise might never have been asked and allowing the researcher to explore events in detail as the people involved usually comprise a captive group. This encapsulates the opportunity offered by the EIF and I used the case study to observe the organisation over time and reflect on the interconnections of events. Taylor et al (2006) note that the case study generally involves within it a mixture of methods, activities and types of research employing a variety of ways of collecting data in order to try and build a coherent picture, a view which is supported by Brewerton and Millward (2001:55). I used participant observation, interviews with staff and key figures, analysis of the organisation's processes and operation through corporate documents such as minutes and HR induction material, monitoring of media coverage and attendance at informal meetings of staff.

I hoped to observe the way relationships with policy makers operate and affect the processes driving the organisation and to study different aspects and interfaces in order to gain knowledge which would be relevant to policy making or professional practice (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:17). The case study also had elements of the 'now' design as described by Brewerton and Millward (2001:53) to examine an ongoing event, which can be organisational change in relation to a particular outcome of interest, or strategies of coping, over a fixed period of time. I employed the narrative model of eliciting and analysing descriptive accounts (Brewerton and Millward 2001:54) which aims to understand the 'stories' people tell about aspects of their experience (Czarniawska 2004).

The research is an exploration of the history of the EIF, of how it has evolved, how it interprets and understands its own history and current activity, and how it tells that story, both internally and externally. I noted that researchers have become

increasingly interested in stories ‘as a result of the emergence of organisational symbolism and culture as important areas of investigation’ (Bryman 1995:176). How people make sense of their world is an important aspect of the reality of a cultural organisation like the EIF and the capturing and interpretation of stories from interviews, actions and conversations is an important research method.

The case study method, which is used to explore and gain insights into previously uncharted areas, also raises the question of generalisability since only one festival is being studied. Burgelman (1985) suggests that this is problematic since one festival may not be typical or throw light on other international festivals. However, although the EIF is unique, it has been used as a model for the establishment of other international arts festivals. There are likely to be elements of generalisability in its operation since there is evidence that it continues to devise innovative strategies which are adopted by other festivals, providing a lead, acting as an ‘exemplar’ and thus bridging the gap between the specific and the general (Brewerton and Millward 2001:56). Bryman (1995:173) also notes that Mitchell (1983:186-211) and Yin (1984:172) argue that case studies engender patterns and linkages which can be of theoretical importance. I decided that the advantages of the case study as a research method outweighed the disadvantages in terms of the potential for production of in-depth knowledge.

A further element which had an influence on the way I used the case study approach was my own previous experience as a manager within the arts funding system, most recently at SAC. This meant that many aspects of the EIF’s world were familiar to me. I was aware of the complex and sometimes demanding aspects of partnership which can exist between a major client and a funding body. While at SAC, although I had not worked in the department responsible for funding the EIF, I had worked in the Literature, Film, Visual Arts and Creative Industries departments and there were mutual acquaintances and colleagues. The nature of the relationship between EIF personnel and myself as researcher had to be negotiated and inevitably retained traces of my previous self as an arts manager, both from my point of view as well as that of EIF personnel.

The main features of the case study approach which I considered appropriate to the circumstances and likely to yield best results were participant observation, interviewing and informal meetings with the Managing Director who was my non-academic supervisor.

4.1.1 Participant observation

Bryman (1995:142) defines participant observation as ‘fairly prolonged immersion of the researcher in the context that is to be studied with the purpose of gaining first-hand knowledge of that context, primarily through observation of individuals as they go about their normal work activities.’ Schlesinger further defines this method as permitting ‘the theoretically informed observation of the social practices of cultural production’ (Schlesinger 1980:xxxii) which can produce insights into the culture of the organisation and therefore the ‘mediatedness’ of cultural production. The method is generally, used in conjunction with others such as analysis of documents and interviewing. Bryman (1995) identifies three main types of participant observation: covert, full and indirect. In this case the method was indirect as I was introduced to staff as a researcher and participated in informal events without an identified work role.

Having chosen to use this as a principal method of gaining knowledge, I found the experience of attempting to use it more difficult than I had expected. I hoped originally that I could blend in and that staff would become accustomed to my being there as part of the background (Schlesinger 1978) but found that in reality it was not easy for me to do this within a small organization of intelligent people who know each other well. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) note that it is important for the researcher as ‘active participant’ to recognise that staff and other people’s behaviour and attitudes towards him or her, and between themselves, are affected by the presence of the observer and Berger (2011:196) warns of ‘reactivity’ where the study involves a ‘small cohesive group’ and the presence of a researcher may have an impact on how people normally behave. I was aware that what I observed was necessarily partial as there were inevitably things which were not said and done while I was within earshot. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) describe the experience of the participant researcher as a ‘marginal native’ for whom

marginality is a state of being - there is no point in feeling 'at home' although the researcher might often prefer it. I found that this was indeed how I felt and, both from my point of view and that of EIF staff, there was a tension about me being a participant but also having a disassociated or critically analytical perspective. My aim therefore became to understand what was being studied better, rather than to 'get under the skin' of the organisation and to acquire knowledge which would help me determine what questions I needed to ask in interviews or on other occasions during the research.

I had to further adjust to my role as researcher when I expressed a wish to attend, as an observer, some of the regular meetings at which senior staff devised strategy, particularly evaluation of how the 2009 Festival had gone. My previous experience as a manager was that meetings were the places where decisions were made and where I expected to get the most important information about the organisation. However it was clear that senior staff wished to maintain areas of confidentiality and I realised that I had approached the project with a perception of myself which related to my previous post and had assumed that my work with SAC was a guarantee of my professional discretion at this level. On reflection I understood that, of course, this was not how I was perceived within the EIF and accepted that senior staff did not consider it appropriate that I attend meetings from which other members of staff were excluded, and that there were limits to the extent to which I could participate. In this respect my arts funding experience and connections were not as helpful as I had assumed they might be and, in some ways my previous work may have limited the position I felt able to occupy as a researcher. I considered that it was important to be seen as a trustworthy professional and felt it would be inappropriate to appear to be eavesdropping or looking for indiscretions and this sometimes felt at odds with the role of participant researcher.

My time at the Hub was spent in the large open plan office space, working at a desk in the space occupied by the Artists Liaison Team and near the Technical Team. I was therefore aware of the detailed work of managing the artists' accommodation and travel and able to be part of a general atmosphere of quiet work which did not vary significantly from day to day. Because of the open plan

arrangement, when artists from previous festivals, or forthcoming shows, came to visit members of staff they would usually be taken out to talk and there was very little disruption during office hours. Staff would have brief exchanges about work in the open office but any detailed discussion would happen in more private spaces. The atmosphere was friendly without being cosy although due attention was given to celebrating staff birthdays and other occasions. Staff meetings were short, informal and generally cheerful and consisted of brief updates from each department about how things were progressing.

A further difficulty cited in relation to the participant observer approach is the danger of 'going native' which is discussed by Schlesinger (1980) in his analysis of the potential drawbacks of participant observation as experienced himself in his 1978 study of the assemblage of broadcast news within the BBC. He suggests that, If there is prolonged immersion, the researcher may be 'captured' by the institutional ethos and ideology so that the advantage of independent analysis is compromised. He notes that an organisation which is good at presenting itself, and also genuinely strives for excellence, is particularly seductive. I saw that I was vulnerable to this as I began the research with a high regard for the EIF based on its status as a major client of SAC, the views of colleagues who worked with the organisation and my own enthusiasm as a regular audience member over many years. My experience as an arts manager meant that I was also used to interacting with clients using a variety of methods which included monitoring performance, assessing applications and observing decision making at Board meetings. However, now I was in a different relationship and, in undertaking this research, I became aware that my previous experience, both professionally and personally, had to be balanced by a critical approach which was appropriate to the academic framework I was now working in.

4.1.2 Interviews

An important aspect of the case study approach was the use of interviews with expert witnesses to the internal and external functioning of the EIF as an organisation over time. The interviews were used to contextualise the operation within its cultural policy environment. They provided a 'narrative mode of

knowing’ based on an assumption of the ‘intentionality of human actions’ (Czarniawska 2004:7). I was aware that the context in which the interview was taking place and my position as researcher would affect what was said. Interviews were arranged through the Managing Director so staff were aware that my work was of interest and relevance to the management of the organisation and responses were correspondingly highly professional and comprehensive but also careful. The interview technique I adopted was to allow an ebb and flow of discourse and, through both directive and non-directive questioning, to allow the interviewee space to talk about things in their own way, to ‘elicit narratives’ in Czarniawska’s terms and gain understanding of the person’s subjective experience as they engage with organizational tasks and processes (Broussine 2008:7). Given the fact that all the staff interviewed were working in a highly creative environment and were used to discussing and assessing creative work, I felt able to encourage discursive and thoughtful responses. I took the view that interviews accompanied by direct observation, would help me to better understand ‘the stage on which reported events are taking place’ (Czarniawska 2004:50).

Jonathan Mills, the Festival Director, gave three interviews - in June 2009, February 2010 and June 2011. Formal questions were prepared as starting points to discover his vision for the Festival and also his views on the wider issues informing the research such as festivalisation, the importance of partnerships, the changing relationships with government. He was generous with his time and spoke with energy. He was expert at interacting with press and with interviewers and produced well articulated arguments and ideas in response to my questions. Czarniawska (2004:50) quotes Miller and Glassner (1997) on the way that ‘interviewees sometimes respond to interviewers through the use of familiar narrative constructs, rather than by providing meaningful insights into their subjective view’ and I endeavoured to steer the conversation so as to elicit more personal views. He was frank sometimes which added depth to my knowledge and on occasion spoke ‘off the record’ as further discussed below.

With other staff my approach was to explain that I was looking to understand the nuts and bolts of how the festival worked and to ask them to describe their cycle of work, how their department related to other departments and what changes they

had experienced in their work over time. From these starter questions the interviews were flexible and as free ranging as the interviewees were prepared to be, accepting that each individual would have different ways of expressing their engagement with the EIF and explaining the nature of their work. It was expected that the information they gave would be both factual and interpretive and express a degree of received opinion and elements of personal interests, concerns, relationships and histories. Each interview was between 45 - 70 minutes.

I was aware that, in the circumstances, the interview method would have some limitations. Interviews with staff were carried out in the office in order not to encroach too much on their time and, understandably, all those interviewed presented the EIF and their work in a very positive light. In fact, although I expected that the more formal exchanges of information would express positive images of the EIF I found that a particular unity of expression and even of 'voice' was notable. This could be traced to the recent re-branding exercise in 2008, which all staff had been part of, and which will be further unpacked in Chapter Five. It appeared to have been very successful in creating a view of the EIF which was available to be universally expressed by the staff and which acted both as a very positive confirmation of the EIF's status and worth and as an on going aspiration for their work.

The interviews therefore provided useful detail of how the organisation worked from a variety of perspectives as some staff had been working there for many years and others were relatively new. It was material from which inferences could be drawn and which was augmented by other forms of evidence and exchanges like informal gatherings to celebrate birthdays, suppers after the launch of the Festival each year and discussions at staff meetings. An advantage of the three year time factor was that the interviewees could be approached again, or on different occasions, less formally, and therefore new material or strategic directions could be included.

The Interviews revealed a pattern of overlapping responsibilities and a regular cycle of delivery points as each festival is planned, budgeted, programmed,

marketed and delivered. Jackie Westbrook, the Director of Marketing and Communications, illustrates this sense of a continual interlinked round of activity:

Things never cool down. Planning and delivery overlap. This period is an overlap, but we are still planning. Lots of things are still planning and we are also having to start to deliver. Brochure and launches at the moment. The other big thing is the Olympics and planning for that. Trying to lift our eyes beyond the immediate - what needs done, planning for next year, and how can we exploit this creatively for 2012? Lots of layers and lots of things to think about all the time. I've just had a meeting with a company who've been trying to help us on future proofing ourselves in terms of technology. (Interview with Jackie Westbrook, Director of Marketing and Communications, 15 January 2010)

This overlap of activity and relationship emerged as essential aspects of the operation of the organisation. Other interviews evidenced that this was so in all departments, as indicated by this brief extract from an interview with the Technical Team which shows how this type of evidence was accessed and gives a sense of how individual staff members responded to questions about their work.

Q: Can you describe how your year works - for instance what happens during the run up to the festival?

A: We have five new teams coming in. Heads of Stage Management, Lighting, Sound, Audio Visual, Staging. We have files for each visiting company, everything that comes in is put into the file... details of what we are supplying, what they are bringing. Heads come in and read through files and decide what they want to do. Head of Stage Management will liaise with Head of Staging, each Head works across all the shows, the Heads are all friends, come in May, June all of July and August. They are all professionals, all have other jobs - Carrie, Head of Stage Management, is working with the National Theatre - it's a condition of their jobs that they can come every year. The Head of Lighting works full time for

Birmingham City Ballet. He only took that job if he was guaranteed time off to come to Edinburgh.

Q: What would make someone want to do this?

A: Them as individuals, its long hours, its really complicated, you are isolated, there is a lot of pressure on Heads, there's no logical reason, you either *get* the festival and always want to do it or you never come back. You get it and enjoy it. We work together, don't always agree, we've worked together for 20, no 16 years. We have arguments - but we work as a team. Coal face is us and Jill (*Artists Liaison team*), all about what the festival is about. We prepare but there is nothing strategically we can do in advance. If we don't come up with stuff the shows don't happen. If there is a muck up with sponsorship the show still goes on. Festival is about putting stuff on. We've only lost 2 shows (*detailed examples of the reasons for both given*). It's horrible when that happens. It's a great organisation to work for. I think we're seen as naughty schoolboys in the corner sometimes, but we love it when the Festival starts. (Interview with John Robb, Head of Technical and Stephen Bremner, Technical Administrator. 19 January 2010.)

The interview conveys a sense of the team rolling up its sleeves and gave a completely new perspective on the people I had seen beginning to come in and out of the office from May onwards and who, in June, engulfed my desk and displaced me. A sense of energy and pride in the festival and the Technical Team's role in it was palpable beyond the words used. Although this was January, a long way from either the past 2009 or the coming 2010 festival they still conveyed the buzz, the sense of being at the centre, knowing the details of every performance, being key players in getting the work on, knowing that everything depends on them to get the Festival to the audiences and to look after the companies. Their experience of themselves, and the Artists Liaison Team, as essential components of making the festival work, is at the heart of job satisfaction and loyalty to the Festival. In the same interview they admitted that some experiences on shows could be 'awful' - but in such cases they knew that the cycle would keep going, the show would

finish, a new one would take its place. While it was a vital matter for them to make all the shows work to the highest standard, there was also the imperative of moving forward all the time until the end of the Festival. I was able to confirm by observation of interactions between staff and interviews with other staff that the Technical Team's view of themselves and their importance was shared by colleagues. The Head of Technical is also part of the senior management of the organisation and included in discussion of the strategic planning of the programme for each year.

4.1.3 Supervisory and Informal meetings

Joanna Baker, the Managing Director of the EIF was a non-academic supervisor for the project. She provided comments and amendments on accuracy on the case study chapters which gave me an expert view, based on long experience and insider knowledge of the material, which was a vital resource around which I could elaborate ideas.

We also had irregular meetings which were not focussed on written work but took place on an ad hoc basis and were, to some extent, conversations, rather than formal interviews, about what was happening at the time. I found these meetings a very stimulating resource, useful in orienting the research with a view from the centre of the organisation. Joanna Baker offered an in depth perspective on the EIF since she had come with Brian McMaster in 1992 as Marketing Director and had therefore brought that special expertise and orientation into the EIF. The insights and ideas garnered in these meetings were an important resource for all aspects of the thesis. She was also very helpful in persuading busy people to give time and attention to the research project. In 2010 she also invited me to an initial planning meeting of a campaign to make the Edinburgh Festivals part of the Cultural Olympiad in 2012 and the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014. This gave a particularly valuable insight into the way strategy was planned and the issues which had to be considered which is further discussed in Chapter Seven. It presented a real opportunity to understand the way the organisation approached a new area of work and how it operated in relation to a wide range of partners in Edinburgh and the UK.

4.2 Use of Archives, Secondary Literature and Internal Documents

4.2.1 Archives

The written testimony left by those involved in the early years of the EIF is an invaluable resource and is collected in a few key archives. The National Library of Scotland (NLS) holds first hand accounts of the setting up of the EIF and a range of letters, transcripts and documents including some ACGB reports and assessments. There are also collections of photographs, programmes and posters. Another primary resource consulted was the collection of Minutes of the Edinburgh Festival Society (EFS) kept at the Festival offices. The City Archives also hold sets of Council Minutes and sets of the Recreation Council Minutes and some collections of the Town Clerk's Minutes relating to the Edinburgh Festival Society .

This original material gives clues to what was considered important at the time, what motivated the key personalities and how the stories were generated and told but it is not particularly easy for a researcher to access. The material at the NLS is held in its Manuscript Collections section. These include accessions by the NLS itself and also personal donations of collections of programmes, photographs and correspondence made by eminent figures. There are also corporate deposits by SAC and EIF of reports, letters and exchanges on an ad hoc basis, and collections of photographs, programmes, press cuttings and posters. There are original documentary records of the artists and performances and evidence of the critical reception of EIF programming and the cultural, political and moral debates it stimulated. Further detail of the material available at the NLS is given in Appendix A. The documents are listed in index files and items can be requested in person at the NLS and are generally produced within an hour.

Currently there is no systematic transfer of archival material to the NLS from EIF or Creative Scotland and, although the sorting and indexing of some of the material in the collections has been done, further documentation of what is there would be helpful to researchers. Because there is a lack of consistency about what has been preserved there is therefore a lack of consistency about what can be inferred from it. For example, ACGB reports can be found and contain recommendations which

were the result of consultation with a particular group of people. However, it is not a complete set and a report five years later might contain quite different views, but is not preserved. It is therefore important to consult SAC/Creative Scotland sources to build up a consistent account of ACGB views about the EIF.

However, accepting the potential hurdles which are inevitable in trying to unpick the past, it is possible to get an insight into the thinking of some of the key figures at the time about the EIF and also about how it thought of itself. Selected examples from the archives at the NLS give immediacy to the dilemmas and dramas. For instance, the Minutes of the Programme Committee of 4 December 1947, illustrate the difficulty there has always been about how to include Scottish theatre work in the EIF programme. The Scottish Officer of ACGB had tried to canvas Scottish views and commissioned reports from theatre companies in Perth, Dundee and Glasgow to give advice. However, extracts from the three reports show wildly divergent ideas about how to proceed (NLS Acc 11309/6).

The text of a broadcast by Eric Linklater, recorded in October 1948, shows how that writer saw the establishment of the EIF as an illustration of the 'new spirit' which was asserting intellectual equality and 'aesthetic generosity' which would transcend political boundaries. He greeted it as a sign that 'Scotland is beginning to take its place again in the comity of Europe- not by political action but [. . .] our new adventure is art [. . .] and will make Edinburgh capital of Europe,' (NLS Acc101550: talk recorded 8 October 1948 for the Scottish Home Service).

The City Archives is also a repository of useful original material relating to the EIF - much of it in the files of full City of Edinburgh Council Minutes and Recreation Council Minutes. There are also boxes specifically referencing the Edinburgh Festival, described in detail in Appendix A, which can be accessed on request from the City Archivist and include Minutes, details of contracts with artists, items of publicity, newspaper articles, correspondence relating to grants and letters and petitions received from the public in response to controversial programming at the festival. There is plenty of original material but, at present, gems are encountered by accident rather than intent which, though fascinating is a time-consuming process, and shortage of resources means it is unlikely that more specific indexing

can help the researcher. In dealing with this material, without the time to work through everything systematically, it was useful to know what you were looking for before you started.

In addition Edinburgh Central Library holds collections of material relating to the EIF which can be accessed from the Edinburgh Room on request. This includes books and collections of press cuttings from 1815 when the first Edinburgh Music Festival was held. These volumes of press cuttings held under ML.38E offer an invaluable resource for researchers who want to analyse how discourse on issues and ideas relating to the festival have changed over time, although often the issues have remained the same.

The Edinburgh Festival Society (EFS) Minutes, which are held at the EIF, offer the official perspective on the administration of the organisation. They are carefully preserved and consistent and thus provide the researcher with a version of history which can be accessed chronologically and also offer the reward of finding surprising nuggets of information. Those I consulted were examples of the minute writer's art, where only the driest of accounts are given of what were occasionally rather exciting events. For example, the Minutes record that Festival Directors have been appointed, contracts renewed, and sometimes not renewed but never refer to the name or to the drama which occasionally accompanied their comings and goings. While it was helpful to read other histories of the time, including the relevant autobiographies, so as to be able to interpret the moments of crisis and difficulty which lay beneath the largely unruffled surface of the official EFS minutes they are certainly a valuable cultural resource.

While data contained in reports and letters have the advantage of not being contaminated by interaction or bias associated with the researcher (Bryman 1995:197) they were examined with an awareness that they are social products occurring in a particular context which cannot be uncritically accepted at face value. I was aware that the documents studied reveal aspects of the interests and perspectives of the writer and offered clues about the writers' presuppositions and the motives underlying the act of writing (Hammersley & Atkinson:124). Letters and reports can contain 'self serving' bias (Bryman 1995) and attention was paid to

the reasons they were written, the kinds of narrative that they are and the reasons they are preserved.

4.2.2 Secondary research resources

Chapter Three notes how little secondary literature there is which focuses on the EIF itself. The autobiographies of Festival Directors and work by enthusiasts and fans is referenced but, while rich in anecdote and period and personal detail, they present particular problems for a researcher. The writers of autobiographies have their own story to tell and want to present themselves in a particular way, so their narratives are not necessarily designed to be entirely accurate. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007:129) remind the researcher that ‘the past is always being constructed through acts of memory’ and therefore analysis of narratives of the past must be done with an awareness that memory is notoriously partial and creative. The EIF has been host to charismatic and extraordinary artists and their companies over the years and enthusiasts and participants write amusingly about the excitements and enormous frustrations of putting the best art the world has to offer into unsuitable venues in the sometimes reluctant environment of the city of Edinburgh. However they do not generally discuss the EIF’s wider role and remit. The research therefore needed to be augmented by theory from the appropriate literature and from observation of the organisation.

Secondary sources used to establish the theoretical context for the work are outlined in Chapter Two and included books and journals on the history of festival and its relationship with the development of ideas about culture and cultural theory, on cultural policy and theoretical analyses of the increasingly political use of festivals in Europe and the West, particularly during the postwar years. Literature on issues of nationhood and identity, particularly in Scotland, is also referenced. The theory of organisational structures, of corporate communications, of partnership and networking is also explored in relation to the EIF and the development of theoretical work on the economics of international festivals is considered. The aim was to create an account of the background against which the EIF has operated in the past and which informs how it operates today.

While the EIF may not have attracted very much academic analysis it has extensively recorded and evaluated its own performance, providing a public account of how the organisation relates to the policy agendas of stakeholders and to the other Edinburgh festivals. Externally produced documents by commissioned researchers provided independent assessments of the benefits of the festivals and recommendations for the future which are further discussed in Chapter Seven. Publications by Festivals Edinburgh in 2011, which include *Edinburgh's Festivals: Defining Scotland's Cultural Identity on the Global Stage*, illustrate how the festivals are delivering on the stakeholders' agendas.

4.3 Ethics

Knowledge is not simply a politically neutral product . . . ethical decisions will therefore depend upon the values of the researchers and their communities and will inform the negotiations which take place between researcher, sponsors, research participants and those who control access to the information which the researcher seeks ('gatekeepers'). (May 1997:54)

The partners in this collaborative research project are organisations with existing guidelines on ethical issues relating to research and experience of implementing them. These follow a set of principles which guide the conduct of the research, regardless of the place or circumstances (May 1997:55). They are based on a common understanding of the aims and processes of the research and freely given assent on the part of the researched to be part of the research process. An initial meeting between myself and the supervisors from the University and the EIF established agreed ground rules for communication and process. However, as Denscombe (2003:176) notes, 'researchers do not follow the rules, they interpret the code and make decisions within the spirit of the code' and I was aware that the burden of responsibility for the conduct of the research lies with the researcher.

Professional ethics cannot entirely guard against issues which may arise in relation to confidentiality and in terms of the subsequent use of the research. Given the developments in communication technology it is increasingly difficult for a

researcher to control how the research, once in the public domain, may be used. This meant that I exercised judgement on how I used the interview material and used only what was relevant to the research questions. This was because, in Scotland, a small country with two national newspapers, the EIF is considered newsworthy and items about it appear prominently in the press. I understood that the EIF was vulnerable because journalists can access the research and use it in ways which cannot be foreseen and could be harmful to the organisation. Information about the EIF is carefully controlled by the press department and senior staff were concerned that research material generated by me could be misquoted or used mischievously.

I therefore needed to balance a commitment to be 'independent, objective and honest' (Denscombe 2003:178) against responsibility to the participants in the research. The interest of the organisation was in fact prioritised over the production of knowledge *per se*. This was not simply a question of power - that of supervisor or collaborator over researcher - but of ethics, of honouring the understanding and agreement between researcher and researched as to what the aim of the research project was, a position supported by Denscombe (ibid:179), 'participants should not be adversely affected as a consequence of engaging in the research'. While I had a duty to establish an independent position, I also had to consider the interests and values of the organisation and weigh what was truly relevant to this research project as opposed to what might be simply interesting or entertaining. I accepted that, because no researcher can entirely control the use to which the research might be put, and it would be unreasonable to undertake research on that basis, I should ensure that the research did not include material which could be used in ways which would be harmful to the organisation or its stakeholders.

These kinds of decision were most likely to arise in interviews with staff and stakeholders and in these cases the University's ethical guidelines were followed. The principle of *informed consent* (ibid:183) meant that all interviewees understood that interviews were being recorded and there was an assumption of implicit agreement that material recorded in an interview can be used unless, as happened occasionally, the interviewee spoke 'off the record'. Joanna Baker was

able to see drafts of material and discuss the final drafts with colleagues which gave an opportunity for those participating to indicate if they found anything inaccurately expressing their views. While this strategy ran the risk of losing some colourful or less guarded views, I chose to respect the wishes of participants because of the nature of the collaborative relationship and the priority that no participant should be adversely affected. Since the element of participant observation was open rather than covert, other ethical issues relating to privacy did not arise.

4.4 Summary

I interpreted the opportunity presented by this research project as one of 'collaborative awareness' a relationship where the aim is 'to carry out research *with* people rather than *on* them' (Broussine 2008:38). The collaborative status of the project offered obvious advantages, for example it was beneficial to the research that the Managing Director of the organisation had a role as non-academic supervisor. She enabled interviews with busy staff and gave an expert, high level overview of the operation. I remained independent but the use of material was negotiated with the research partners.

The collaborative partnership also meant that there was a potential that there might be a number of different expectations of the research which I would want to accommodate. For academic purposes, developing knowledge in response to a gap in the critical discourse on cultural policy driving international festivals appeared an appropriate outcome. However achieving a useful outcome for the EIF itself seemed less straightforward due to its own expertise and professional use of collaborative research. The aim of the research was to generate new knowledge about international festivals and the EIF had already engaged in a number of research projects with this intention. After discussion with Joanna Baker I agreed to write a brief report for the EIF on developing a policy on archives which is appended to this document as Appendix A. The report gives more detail of where archival material is currently held and makes recommendations on how the EIF might begin to establish a policy on archiving which would ensure that important

material is made more available to the public and to future researchers in appropriate and innovative ways.

The overall aims of the study were served by using the methods outlined above more or less simultaneously and there were advantages and disadvantages associated with this mixture and interplay of methods. On the positive side, I was able to adjust and prioritise as it became clearer what would be most useful and relevant to the research and what was possible within the cycles of activity at the Festival offices. However, there was always a high volume of activity at the Festival and in cultural policy circles in Edinburgh and, at the same time, there was a range of literature from unfamiliar disciplines which I needed to absorb and a quantity of archive material that I wanted to access. The sheer amount of information and activity, combined with flexibility about which resources and methods would be used, sometimes seemed overwhelming. It was difficult to balance the acquisition of knowledge about ever more events and material with the need to conceptualise and to write. I found the actual process of writing far more time-consuming and difficult than I had expected and would therefore structure any future research more robustly into periods of particular types of activity, allotting far more time for writing and attempting to complete each section of research before going on to the next.

When researching secondary sources I identified that, as well as very little historical or theoretical literature on the EIF, there was also a gap in terms of any consideration of the EIF's relationship with cultural policy in Edinburgh and in Scotland. While my approach was initially to study the EIF as a cultural organization and to examine its cultural and political history, as I proceeded with the research, I began to ask how far it has played a role in shaping that history.

CHAPTER FIVE - MAINTAINING A COMPETITIVE EDGE THROUGH MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Introduction

A key challenge for international arts festivals is to maintain a distinctive position in a cluttered and increasingly competitive landscape for audiences, artists and resources. Edinburgh has achieved pre-eminence as the Festival City but, in 2006, an independent report was commissioned by CEC and partners:

because of a widespread perception, underlined repeatedly in interviews and workshops, that this pre-eminence is under threat [. . .] from other cities within the UK and internationally that have adopted investment in cultural infrastructure and cultural programming as a policy instrument for multiple civic and national goals. (AEA 2006:5).

The report, *Thundering Hooves: maintaining the global competitive edge of Edinburgh's festivals* (AEA 2006), refers to competition from Liverpool and Manchester in the UK, from cities spurred on by Capital of Culture and Olympic Arts funding and also from developing festivals in the Middle East and Asia, including China, Dubai and Singapore. The report is about a 'co-ordinated approach to managing the profile and orientation of the festivals' in Edinburgh and the first recommendation is that 'success depends on achieving and sustaining a consistent international quality threshold for all festivals in order to ensure that the brand value of the festivals is sustained' and states that the festivals must attain 'distinctiveness and pre-eminence within their respective art forms' (AEA 2006:9). The second recommendation supports this position, stating that stakeholders must ensure that the impact of their resource is such that the festivals 'have the potential to be, or already are, world class in their quality and delivery and that their ability to meet such standards clearly and explicitly informs decision-making on resource allocation' (ibid:9). The report acknowledges that the quality of their programmes is essential to the pre-eminence of the Edinburgh festivals.

The EIF's Business Plan (2009-2012:5) also has, as its first key strategic priority, maintaining and enhancing the quality of the programme, described as 'the artistic capital of the organisation' and clearly signaling a recognition that its position as a leading international arts festival depends on its ability to create international impact with its programming.

However, while the artistic programming has always been, and remains, the principle activity of the Festival and depends on the vision and creativity of each Festival Director, new roles have emerged which have demanded changes in the way the EIF sees itself, the way it organizes itself and the skills and expertise it needs to acquire in order to maintain its competitive edge. The focus of this thesis is on the changing role of festivals and in this and the two following chapters I therefore examine those areas of the EIF's work where change is most strongly evident. My observation of the EIF during the period of research indicated that significant changes and new roles for the organisation have occurred in recent years and continue to emerge. It considers how the EIF accommodates these new roles while retaining its focus on cutting edge international quality programming.

In this chapter I examine the EIF's early adoption and implementation of marketing practices and the effect that this emphasis on marketing, branding and communications has had on the functioning of the organisation as a whole. Focusing on evidence gathered in interviews, section 5.1 examines the steady development and expansion of the Marketing and Communications department reflecting the growth in arts marketing begun in the 1980s. Section 5.2 presents evidence of strategies developed to harness high profile artistic assets and section 5.3 focuses on the ways the EIF is meeting the challenge of proliferating new forms of communication technologies which appear to offer limitless opportunities to reach new audiences in new ways. The concluding section considers what changes the prioritisation of a marketing and communications role has made to the EIF's structure and way of operating.

5.1 Development of Marketing and Communications

5.1.1 Demand and Expansion

All marketing and communications functions of the EIF are delivered by one department and the Director, Jackie Westbrook, is part of the senior management team. This reflects the structuring of commercial businesses where research indicates that the benefits of integrating marketing, communications and public relations professionals and giving them access to senior decision makers has been recognised (Cornelissen 2004:130).

Westbrook summarises the department's job as being 'to sell the Festival' and estimated that the department has doubled in size in the fourteen years she has worked at the EIF, increasing from three full time staff to six and, at Festival time, to sixteen 'just to keep up.'

We work in a quite extraordinary environment. No one else has to put up with the amount of noise we have to compete with in terms of noise and visual profile within the city. The Fringe has 2000 more companies than us. We are one company and we are responsible for everything. The companies that come (*for the EIF programme*) aren't responsible for marketing. We are. (Interview with Jackie Westbrook, Marketing and Communications Director, 15 January 2010)

In August maintaining visibility, let alone distinctiveness, when five festivals are competing for audiences in Edinburgh, poses significant challenges for the Marketing and Communications Department. It is responsible for marketing the EIF as an organisation and the programme as a whole and also for marketing all the individual shows which are part of that programme. In 2009 there were 180 performances and events and the range of tasks undertaken by the department for the 2009 Festival, included a mix of routine and new initiatives:

- the launch of the visual re-branding
- production of the Festival brochure
- five official launches of the 2009 Festival Programme

- populating and maintaining the website as an information and sales tool
- emarketing
- ongoing work with the press and broadcast media
- a research pilot on the use of social networking communications for online audience development
- primary and secondary marketing campaigns including the use of billboards, posters and advertising
- participation in Festivals TV
- management of the Hub Ticket Office.

The launch of the Festival brochure in March is the main highly visible strategy which establishes the EIF's annual programme and initiates sales. In 2009, in a bid to promote the EIF more widely internationally, the team organised UK launches in Edinburgh, London and Glasgow plus additional international launches in Singapore, Melbourne, Dublin and Germany. This bid to achieve higher profile and visibility through formal launches has made increasing demands on the organisation in terms of staff expertise, time and resources to organise the necessary press briefings and events which will make these initiatives productive. Derek Gilchrist, Marketing Manager, in an interview on 14 January 2010, described a strategy of working in partnership with hosts in countries funding performances which featured in the 2009 programme. Senior management and members of the marketing team attended the launches abroad which involved press conferences in the morning and receptions for invited guests in the evenings. Gilchrist noted the considerable extra press and media work and cross departmental liaison required to compile appropriate guest lists of sponsors, arts practitioner and Friends. In Edinburgh, 1,000 people were invited to the 2009 launch, over 350 attended and Gilchrist confirmed that these occasions are highly demanding of staff resource as the Festival Director, senior members of staff and all of the Marketing and Communications team are in attendance to meet and greet the press in the morning and guests at the evening reception.

The Festival launch features the first sight of the highly crafted Festival brochure which, although other technical tools are increasingly becoming important as well,

is still the primary marketing tool. In the interview noted above, Gilchrist described it as 'the holy grail of marketing', the key source of programme information for customers and indicated that the EIF is different from other arts organisations in this respect: 'in general, print has declined but for us the brochure is still important, something tangible you can hold in your hand.' The history of the EIF also contributes to making the brochure a collectable item and the high production values make it desirable as well as useful in the street. As a primary marketing tool the brochure must be distinctive and a new post of Graphic Designer was established in 2008. Gilchrist described it as having transformed the EIF's communications and ensured that 'now every little thing we do, all annual reviews and bulletins look great, we have a cohesive feel to everything we do.' In recent years the marketing team have commissioned a creative design agency to produce a unique visual quality and feel for each brochure. A cover and a design toolkit are also produced so that the Graphic Designer at the EIF can ensure a coherent look to all print and media produced for each particular Festival. The EIF produces its own photographs and commissions critical texts on performers and shows from experts.

However, producing the brochure is a challenge because of timing. Westbrook explained:

The need to sell tickets and therefore to produce the brochure is the catalyst that stops the programming. Because they could keep programming up to July, you can always make changes, refine, but the brochure stops it. The cycle hasn't changed, you have to launch early enough to sell tickets, but late enough to allow us to finalise the programme and get what we want for it. The travel industry would love us to launch in September with full programme, but we can't do that. (Interview with Jackie Westbrook, 15 January 2010)

The job of Marketing and Communications is to promote the Festival and sell tickets. Its strategies have been to expand the department to accommodate new roles and to develop a programme of international launches. The marketing process must negotiate the competing agendas of programmers, international travel

promotion companies and the imperative of seizing the opportunity for advance sales before competitor festivals launch.

5.1.2. Creating the Brand - 'looking for that Shostakovich moment'¹⁹

Joanna Baker came to the EIF as Marketing Manager in 1992 and she noted, in interview on 3 May 2010, that Brian McMaster was the first Festival Director to introduce a focus on professionalizing the income generating side of the organisation as well as reviewing and re-asserting intellectually the mission statement and values established in 1947. In a dissertation on the process of developing a new logo for the EIF (Carter 1995), Baker is quoted as saying that she recognised that the image that the EIF was presenting to the outside world 'was certainly out of step with our perception of what the Festival was' (Carter 1995:38). Although Carter described some controversy over the new visual identity, Baker noted, in interview on 3 May 2010, that the process of researching perceptions of the EIF with partners and key figures, as described in Carter (1995), coupled with McMaster's more professional approach to relationships with public stakeholders, helped to bring about a step change in public funding in the early 1990s, as noted in Chapter Three.

In 2007, shortly after he arrived, Mills also commissioned a re-branding. Chapter Two discussed theoretical literature on commercial branding in which discourses veer from advocating it as a way of revitalizing an organization from top to bottom (Travis 2000), to the idea that it is simply a way of maximising profits (Schultz & Schultz 2004). While there was some argument as to the suitability of branding for non-profit organizations (Spruill 2001), in general arts marketers see it as appropriate for international arts organizations like the EIF to engage with branding so that they can maintain visibility in the global arts market (Kapferer 2008). Theoretical analyses of branding indicate that it has developed into an organisational process rather than a way of simply providing a visual identity and Hill et al (2003:23) claim that 'for an organization which truly integrates its

¹⁹Phrase used by Matthew Studdert-Kennedy, Artistic Administrator. Interview 22 January 2010

marketing, artistic quality will be reflected in all aspects of its performance'. In line with these theories, Mills, Baker and Westbrook referred to the branding process as an initiative to improve the management of the organisation through better co-operation and Information exchange, as well as through an updating of visual identity.

The contract to update the brand was awarded to the London based company, Jane Wentworth Associates, in 2007 by a Steering Group representing the senior management of the EIF and members of the Board. Jane Wentworth already had a strong track record as she had worked effectively with Scottish Opera and the National Galleries of Scotland. Westbrook confirmed that this branding process followed the commercial blueprint of engaging the whole organization in the project. She described how the company worked with the EIF for a year, conducting 20 face to face interviews with staff and Board and 10 interviews with externals including funders and sponsors. The branding asserted the mission statement and values familiar to staff who had been with the EIF in 1992 and reinforced them for new staff. Everyone was involved in workshop discussions about the organisation's beliefs, language, attitudes, its range of audiences, its diversity, and its public perception.

The final brand presentation to the Board in 2008 by Jane Wentworth Associates neatly encapsulates the ideas about festival discussed in Chapter Two as shown by the following excerpt (Jane Wentworth Associates 2008):

It's a journey into unknown territory
A release from the everyday
A sense of being part of something big
Our festival transforms the city - and
the lives of people in it.

Discussing the idea of promoting particular core values, De Chernatony (2001:5) suggests that consumers 'choose brands on the basis of the way these values fit their lifestyles and enable them to satisfy their needs.' The values identified as those of the EIF, as indicated in the diagram of the brand blueprint below, appear

to be ones which consumers would *want* to identify with and are clearly those identified as ‘emotional’ by De Chernatony (2001) and Travis (2000).

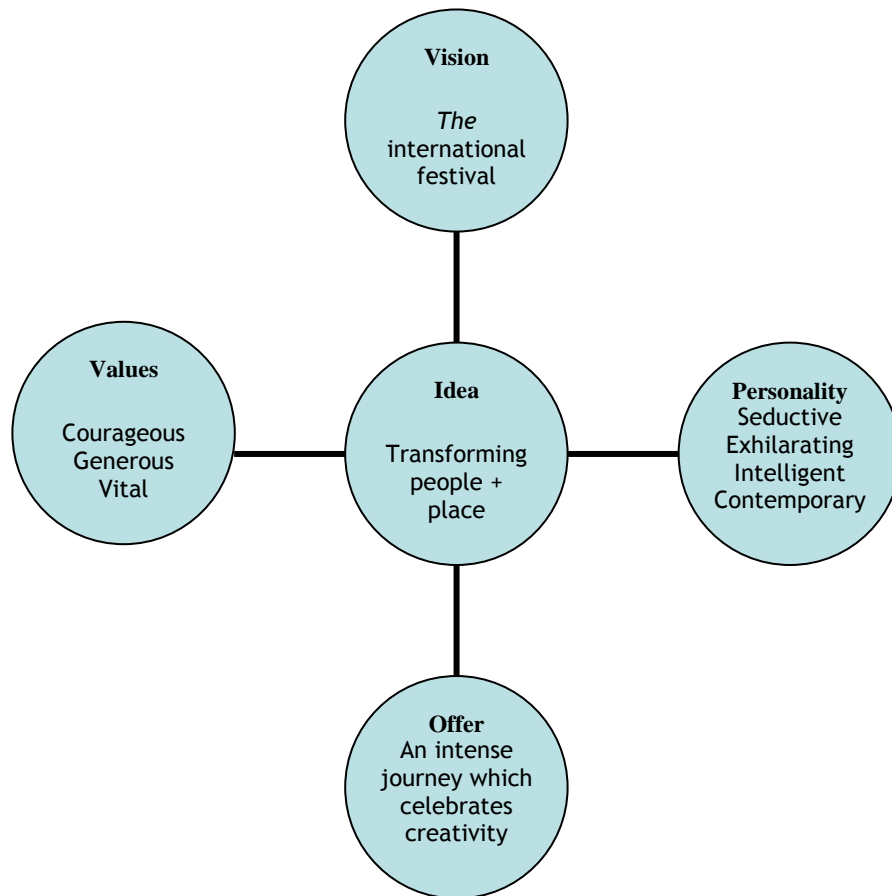


Figure 2. Brand Blueprint 2008²⁰:

The same could be said of the use of personality traits to market festivals. Colbert and d’Astous (2006) studied the personality of cultural festivals, testing evidence that ‘consumers naturally attribute personality traits to commercial goods.’ The core personality traits they identify for festivals are *dynamism*, *sophistication*, *openness to the world*, *reputation and innovation* (Colbert and d’Astous 2006:220), traits few international arts festivals would not aspire to and similar to those used to describe the EIF.

²⁰ Jane Wentworth Associates 2008 - an illustration of the slide of the brand blueprint which was part of the presentation to the Board 2008.

Many of the EIF staff referred to the 2007 brand review experience as a successful team building exercise and illustrated the role of contemporary branding in overhauling the operation of the organisation as well as creating a re-vitalised visual identity. Schlesinger (2010:271), in an article on the strategy adopted by Greg Dyke to inspire creativity when he took over at the BBC in 2002, notes that the consultants Dyke commissioned used a technique of 'Appreciative Inquiry' which encouraged BBC staff to talk about what is good about the organisation. Schlesinger's findings also suggest that the value of the BBC process was that it 'contributed to a wide-spread change of mood and engineered re-engagement' (Schlesinger 2010:284). In the same way, the brand blueprint which emerged for the EIF summarised the good ideas the EIF had about itself and its aspirations and also allowed engagement with internal and external issues.

Our external image is not where we think we are. We need to change our external image. Our supporters are more traditional and align with traditional aspects of the festival, we struggle with the image of staid, fussy, dull. We are world class but not as exciting as we think we are. At re-branding this was the thing most discussed. We are a very young team, those making decisions are very vibrant, excited. But we are seen as the Granddaddy of the lot - the Fringe seems young and vibrant, not us. (Interview with Nikki Furley, Head of Sponsorship, 22 January 2010)

The evidence of interviews suggested that the branding contained a condensation of what was already inherent in the mission and values of the organization but allowed it to be re-presented with a contemporary language and focus. The EIF seeks to define itself as *contemporary* and *seductive* rather than the staid and serious sister of the Fringe and, by asserting this personality, the branding is appealing to younger audiences and sponsors. The use of *exhilarating* and *vital* also asserts a continuing commitment to festivity and to the new and the dynamic. However, the evidence suggested that there was a tension between the need to be seen as innovative and a recognition that an essential part of the EIF's power is its tradition.

This festival was the first place in the Western World Shostakovich performed. There is a sense of tradition about what we do and the way we do it. If you look through the history, there is a sense of burden, not in a weighty way but as an inspiring thing. So many extraordinary things happened first *here* and began to be explored *here*. It is our *raison d'être*. We should always be looking to have the first performance of a composer not yet discovered, work from countries not yet seen, different global structure . . . looking for that Shostakovich moment. Its not a tradition in terms of history but it is a living thing, we keep discovering . . . Its difficult to maintain a tradition and constantly reinvent. (Interview with Matthew Studdert- Kennedy, Artistic Administrator, 22 January 2010)

There is an inevitable schizophrenia in the fact that the brilliance of the Festival's history is a vital aspect of its appeal to many who see that tradition as a guarantee of a quality experience and yet it is committed to constantly breaking new ground. It is not just the Fringe on the doorstep pushing the EIF to refresh and renew, that imperative is built into its own core mission, and the new branding focuses on projecting a more dynamic image rather than on asserting reputation and tradition.

Staff interviewed understood that the marketing of the Festival depended, to a great extent, on them. The branding encouraged 'relational marketing' where the aim is not to achieve one transaction but to establish 'a lasting relationship with clients' and create a process when they move from being supporters to advocates or even partners and to ensure that they 'get more from the relationship than they were originally looking for' (Hooley et al 1998:358). Hooley et al also indicate the importance of recruiting and training employees and rewarding them appropriately in order to provide the quality of service that will give customers real satisfaction. Staff in all departments confirmed in interviews that the EIF demonstrates a value driven approach to staff management which entrusts them with resource and empowers them to come up with innovative ideas:

these individuals are not people who need to be told what to do. Their knowledge and experience is enough - but my role is to be there for them. Each department has ambitions to be better and improve presentation - it

involves innovation. There is a lot of repartee, and sensitivity, all are aware of what the boundaries are, what is correct, there is great loyalty too. (Interview with Alison Riach, Planning and Operations Director, 21 January 2010)

A feature of the organisation, evidenced in interviews with staff, was a consistent respect for artists, audiences and for each other.

De Chernatony (2001:247) also notes that relational marketing has driven a move to 'an experience economy' where customers are more involved and conscious of having an experience and 'through their greater immersion, they are more aware of the values of the brand'. While festivals are in a good position to exploit this, it is important that the experience being sold lives up to the values being asserted since 'promising more than can be delivered may result in dissatisfied customers' (Hooley et al 1998:361). The promotion of 'experience' is also complex for an organisation like the EIF. Its branding as *the* festival is predicated on presenting challenging work that cannot simply be marketed as 'fun' and celebratory. Marketing such work successfully without diluting its power means that the relationship which the audience will expect to have with that work must be carefully calibrated.



Figure 3. The 2009 Logo

The creation of a new visual identity was a separate but associated part of the brand review process. The Steering Group awarded the commission to Hat Trick and the process was also a more encompassing exercise than simply creating a new logo - see Figure 3 above.

The adoption of the visual re-branding was presented to the Board in 2008 as being 'about creating a visual language that can be used across a range of media'. The core identity elements were the mark (or logo), the typography and colour palettes and the imagery. In a presentation to the EIF Board in 2008, Jane Wentworth Associates explained that the mark was designed to give a 'strong, bold presence' and allow both flexibility and coherence. The geometric shape was contemporary clearly defining itself as being about *design* rather than expressing *meaning* which previous logos had tried to do. It made its first appearance on the 2009 Festival brochure cover with a distinctive design commissioned from a Glasgow design company.



Figure 4. Cover of the 2009 Brochure

Feedback to the Marketing and Communications department and interviews with stakeholders indicated that it was considered elegant and modern and as ‘confident and distinctive, quite tribal as well’ (Anita Clark, Lead Officer for EIF, interview 4 May 2010). The EIF had a flexible promotional tool appropriate to the time rather than a logo which strained to express so much in itself that it distracted from the product. It is seen to better effect in the artwork chosen for the 2010 brochure to express the flamboyance of work from South America.



Fig 5. Cover of the 2010 Festival Brochure

The management of the new visual identity brought with it extra staffing resource for the Marketing and Communications department. The process also advocated that ‘staff speak with the same voice’ (De Chernatony 2001:xii) so that the management of the brand was therefore identified as a continuing responsibility which included all departments.

5.1.3 Managing brand identity

Kapferer (2008:229) suggests that the function of brand identity is to preserve the organisation’s core identity and mission and also to ‘open bridgeheads into the future’. The immediate reaction to the new identity in 2009 was confused in relation to these functions. In spite of the extensive work and expense involved in the process of re-branding there was no press reaction to the new visual image

when it was launched in March 2009, or interrogation of either the aesthetics or the costs. This was because two other issues attracted press interest, both illustrating challenges the Marketing and Communications department faces in managing the brand.

The first was that the brochure cover was seized upon, by some of the press, as controversial. Designed by Glasgow design company *Timorous Beasties* it was a toile derived from a style of decorative wallpaper, showing images of people enjoying innocent rural pursuits, popular in France during the Enlightenment. However, the Edinburgh toile revealed the contemporary city.



Figure 6. Detail from the 2009 Festival Brochure Cover

The company had already created similar toiles for Glasgow and London, but the commissioning of such a design for the Festival brochure, in effect for the Festival City itself, caused a commotion which evidenced the complexity of being a cutting edge arts organization with a prominent promotional role in encouraging tourism.

When the detail of the images of the classic monuments and buildings of the Enlightenment were seen to be populated by drunks and derelicts, traffic chaos, fights and the intrusion of brutalist architecture, the reactions of local shopkeepers and Tory councillors were immediately sought by the press. A flurry of articles appeared in the local and national papers accusing the EIF of mis-judging what was required to *sell* the festival. Politicians predicted that potential tourists would take a second look at the cover and switch allegiance to Manchester International Festival which was taking place in June that year. Also, the rivalry between Glasgow and Edinburgh, liable to erupt over any issue, whether related to arts, sport, business or politics, provided some particularly easy headlines for the press, for example, ‘Beastly Weegies defile Athens of the North’ in *The Herald*, 29 March 2009, and ‘Festival organizers under fire over the Nedinburgh sights’, *Daily Mail*, 27 March 2009. The Conservative MSP for Edinburgh Pentlands, David McLetchie, fumed: ‘This is a Glasgow agency setting out to destroy the reputation of our capital city. This is an appalling advertisement for Edinburgh, not just our festival’ (Lawrie 2009:9).

This literal response to the cover design illustrates the challenge the EIF faces in maintaining its distinctiveness. While its mission is to offer an innovative international programme, politicians and traders are more concerned about the tourist appeal of the image of Edinburgh it presents. A leader in *The Scotsman* summarised the problem as that of trying to yoke the *avant garde* associated with the EIF to the values of the burghers of Edinburgh: ‘There is a big difference between edgy wallpaper aimed at trendy urban sophisticates and the main Edinburgh International Festival brochure, which is designed to appeal to Edinburgh citizens and foreign visitors’ (*The Scotsman* Leader 2009:7).

Mills responded to the media clamour by making the point that the cover was part of the festival itself, a twist on the Enlightenment theme of the 2009 Festival. He suggested that it was the legacy of the Scottish Enlightenment, as articulated by Burns, Hume and Boswell, that informed the Festival’s exploration of contemporary society. He stressed that the symbolism of the toile’s ‘menace and magic’ was to be understood as integral with the themes and the art of the Festival, not simply as a promotional tool (Cornwell 2009). The commissioning of the cover of the

brochure illustrates Kapferer's (2008:215) discussion of the necessity for creative advertising to 'radicalise' the target and, in this sense, the EIF's choice appears to have both challenged its audience and re-invigorated debate, giving the EIF the chance to re-emphasise its artistic message. In terms of impact, Westbrook, in an interview on 15 January 2010, was confident that the commission had been a success since the brochure cover was eye catching, brought a lot of media attention to the Festival and become a talking point. Susie Burnett, Media Relations Manager, interviewed on 22 January 2010, commented that 'as many liked it as didn't. But of course *The Scotsman* has two people who will object, and there they are objecting'. It was therefore an innovation which worked in Kapferer's terms to 'reframe the brand's image and feed it with the new tangible and intangible attributes brought by this innovation' (2008:230). The design was not innovative in itself, but the way the EIF used it was.

The second issue which distracted the media was the theme of the Enlightenment. There was controversy about how Mills had interpreted this idea which was expressed in criticism of the brochure cover and in dismay about what was included, and not included, in the programme. The choice of the Enlightenment theme was explained in the programme for 2009 as both a development of Mills' previous programming and also a response to the fact that 2009 was the government sponsored Year of Homecoming, celebrating the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns. This was a tourism initiative by the Scottish Government aimed at the Scottish diaspora and managed by EventScotland rather than a cultural body and it focussed on Burns, golf and whisky. The funding criteria which the tourism agency formulated to support events included the requirement that proposals would generate a prescribed percentage of income and this eliminated many of the more risky creative bids from arts organisations.

Evidence of conflict was indicated in media reports of public outrage and bewilderment that Burns, a focus point for The Year of Homecoming, hardly featured at all in the EIF 2009 programme. It was reported in *Scotland on Sunday* that the Festival Director had been asked to appear before the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Culture and Media in January 2009 to explain what they believed was a 'missed opportunity' (Leith 2009:3). Subsequently,

Baker, in conversation with me, corrected this report and noted that Mills had been invited to present the programme to the Cross Party Group and, in the course of the discussion, the question had been brought up by one individual. The Festival Director used all media opportunities to explain how his programming related to the Year of Homecoming by exploring more complex notions of identity and home through all the artforms. He made it clear that exploring the creativity of Scotland's prominent role in the Enlightenment meant also considering the darker side of those times, the religious intolerance, migration and social upheaval. He argued in *The Herald* (Miller 2009:7) that, because Burns would be most adequately celebrated throughout the year, it was more appropriate for the EIF to focus on other interesting Scottish writers such as James Barrie and Robert Henryson and on new commissions like *The Last Witch* from contemporary Scottish writer, Rhona Munro, co-produced with the Traverse. The EIF programme presented a coherent exploration of issues through art including *The Enlightenments*, a Visual Arts programme presented in partnership with the Dean Gallery and in a series of lectures and discussions on the Enlightenment in association with the Royal Society of Edinburgh

From a perceived neglect of Burns, controversy moved to the content of the opening concert. *The Guardian* (Carrell 2009:9) reported that Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus* was a provocative choice since its words celebrate the Duke of Cumberland's victory over the Scottish rebels at Culloden. Mills replied to these criticisms in a way that brought a new perspective:

Let us not conveniently forget that at Culloden there were equal numbers on both sides who were born in Scotland - it has been described as an invasion. Not quite; it was a bloodbath - it remains controversial but it needs to be dealt with. I think it is appropriate to bring the politics of the 18th century into a closer inspection in the 21st century - here is a piece from 250 years ago that no doubt inspires passions to this day. It shows there is a political dimension even to the most classical and staid pieces of music. (Interview with Jonathan Mills, 23 September 2009)

Senior staff felt that it was appropriate that the commissioned cover and the programming decisions stimulated news and debate about important issues, rather than the branding process attracting media interrogation in terms of ‘value for tax payers’ money’. 2009 illustrated that an increasingly important aspect of managing the brand and maintaining a competitive edge is the management of relationships with press and media.

5.1.4 Management of the Press

Kapferer (2008:218) states that if an organisation wants to create a buzz ‘the first approach is to make plenty of time for the press and media’ and strategic engagement with the press is another aspect of the EIF Marketing and Communications operation which has expanded in recent years. Just as the Graphic Designer post was created to maintain the integrity of the design on all visual material, an upgraded post of Manager of Media Relations was created to manage all communications with press and broadcasters. The Press team also viewed the Festival Director as an asset as he was positive about engaging with the press in a forthright and confident way.

Susie Burnett, the Media Relations Manager, in an interview on 22 January 2010, confirmed that recent changes in the management of newspapers have added to the problems that the EIF faces in managing relationships with the media, since coverage is increasingly subject to editorial control which can mean that neither she, nor the journalists, have very much control over what finally appears in the paper. She also spoke of the pressures caused by changes in the conditions of employment and status, particularly of the arts journalists at *The Herald*, many of whom she described as passionately committed journalists who have moved from full time staff posts to working for review fees. This reduction in print media working conditions and budgets creates pressures which the EIF has responded to by, for example, organising and paying for press trips abroad so that journalists can see shows scheduled for the EIF programme in advance and be better informed. Previously these were paid for by the newspapers but now the EIF is obliged to cover costs.

Burnett confirmed that even this kind of arrangement can have its challenges as generally members of the EIF press team do not have the resources to go on the press trips themselves and therefore cannot manage any problems which may arise abroad between journalists and artists. She gave an example where press had been sent to St Petersburg in 2007 to interview the Russian conductor Gergiev:

we ended up sitting outside his dressing room for two days and nights - the press office hadn't dared ask him - in the end I banged on his door and insisted we get some time. I was glad I was on that trip. (Interview, Susie Burnett, 22 January 2010)

Another challenge for the team is the difficulty of getting space in the media before the programme is in production. Burnett explained that the department had therefore developed a strategy of creating long term relationships with journalists and critics both in Scotland and London. Regular briefings with prominent music and art critics to keep them informed is now part of the job to get the press 'warmed up' in advance. However, even though the EIF may keep the programme 'on the radar' of critics and journalists, and the Festival has established itself strongly enough for the press to be interested in its activities, Burnett acknowledged that it is still a struggle to get coverage from press in London because of competition with the whole London arts scene. She gave the example of 2008 when the EIF press team were trying to get coverage for the programme in the same week as the Olympic Games in Beijing and the eruption of major recession issues as well as the London shows. She also mentioned competition from other festivals like Manchester International Festival, which has the advantage of being physically nearer to London and easier for journalists to visit.

The strategy of building partnerships with arts correspondents and editors has been extended to the development of more formal media partnerships with specific papers in the hope of building sustainable relationships as described by Klaic (2009:107) where he advocates 'more advanced forms of partnership' which create special supplements or digital products like podcasts, DVDs and CDs. Burnett described how, in 2009, a media partnership with *The Herald* was established and a

pamphlet of philosophical essays on the Enlightenment was commissioned by EIF to be published and distributed by *The Herald*. This was a one-off initiative and she felt that it illustrated the limitations of such partnerships for the EIF since there was no real investment from *The Herald*, their journalists did not get involved in the writing of the pamphlet and the EIF had to pay the cost price of production, even though it was likely to gain extra sales for the newspaper.

In 2010 *The Scotsman* became a media partner. Burnett wanted this to help the team to improve its relationship with *The Scotsman*, a national newspaper which had a policy at the time which she described as ‘not always celebrating Scotland’. While she aimed to improve relationships she was clear that she did not expect or want the partnership to alter the editorial the EIF gets. She was aware that the efforts of organisations to influence or control their public profile via the media are subject to considerable complexity in practice as discussed in Joep (2004) and McQuail (2010). Staff recognised that the investment of staff time and effort is a long-term strategy and whether a positive outcome can be achieved is dependent on many other factors. The declining power of the print media in Scotland and globally and the fragmentation of news and information through a variety of online sites complicates the terrain for the press team. While their work is directed towards better trust and understanding with the media, the nature of such partnerships between the press and organisations like the EIF is inherently unpredictable since it is vulnerable to political, economic and social forces which neither can control and news agendas are notoriously subject to sudden change. The high investment of energy into partnerships with journalists involves the risk of displacement of other activities, which might be more effective, and, theoretically, image building which may not be productive and remains difficult to quantify. The evidence gained in interviews suggests that outside factors mean that there is no guarantee that the EIF can get, let alone control, press coverage apart from on those issues which regularly appear because the press see them as guaranteeing a good story, for example the familiar hobby horses of the squandering of tax payers money and whether there is enough Scottish work in the programme.

While the department's media strategy has been to affirm the EIF's mission and its commitment to high quality ground-breaking work which can provoke controversy with the public and critics, persuading newspapers to allow space for journalists to engage in more serious analysis of the work is a significant challenge. Detailed audits of media coverage are carried out each year by the marketing department and indicate high value press coverage; in 2009, Burnett noted that the estimated value of the coverage was calculated to be £12 million.

In 2011 the *Edinburgh Festivals Impact Survey* (BOP 2011) used Meltwater News, an online media monitoring service, to track EIF coverage. It tracks 130,000 online news sources globally and captures articles that appear in the online editions of traditional newspapers including *The Scotsman*. In 2010 BOP compared Edinburgh with a number of other major cultural and sporting events including Liverpool 2008, Glastonbury, T in the Park and Wimbledon and reported that 'the Edinburgh Festivals have generated more news articles than any of them. Moreover, the articles reporting on the Edinburgh Festivals do report the highest number of potential viewership of all events that we looked at' (BOP 2011:44). The report recorded that the EIF itself generated 1,952 articles with a total potential readership estimated at 2771,400,921. BOP stated that the results 'exceed what is known from research on other cultural and heritage activities (including where improving local pride and perceptions have been a major aim of the activities)' (BOP 2011:44). However, the research only indicates coverage online and does not indicate whether coverage was positive or negative, although BOP notes that 'journalists have surveyed the material and estimate that articles are predominantly favourable' (ibid). The BOP 2011 report evidences a number of benefits from news coverage which include the pride local residents take in the festivals and the distinctiveness they confer on the city which encourages visitors to attend and re-visit. However, the relationship between press coverage and actual ticket sales is unclear. While staff interviewed believed that previews influence advance ticket sales significantly, it was thought that reviews have less impact.

The Meltwater News figures do not include broadcast media coverage (unless a broadcast feature receives an online write up) and this is significant for many

festivals. Burnett confirmed that getting broadcast coverage for the EIF is a challenge for a number of reasons: they are competing with the Proms in August where the BBC are already committed; productions are expensive to film and television companies no longer have budgets allocated for cultural coverage. To try and get coverage at affordable costs the EIF press office have worked with BECTU to minimise the technical costs of bringing *The Culture Show* to Edinburgh in 2009, and to bring in magazine shows, negotiating different crew agreements, venue costs and timing because they recognise that broadcast coverage can help ticket sales. However, Burnett noted that the costs to the EIF could be up to £1200 for a 3 minute clip which is outside its budget. Mills has made strenuous efforts to encourage broadcasters to invest more in the Edinburgh Festivals. He was reported in *The Times* as having told the Scottish Broadcasting Commission that he was 'slightly staggered' by the corporation's failure to engage seriously with the Festival: 'The BBC must be given the opportunity to think about these things and come back' (Wade 2008: 4). However, the situation did not improve in 2010 and efforts to establish a Scottish digital network which could have provided a platform for more Scottish material as recommended in the Broadcasting Commission of 2008, had not been successful by 2011.

The Press team's competitive strategies are to achieve maximum publicity by fostering better relationships with the press and brokering opportunities for media coverage with broadcasters. Challenges are changes in media ownership, working practices and positioning in Scotland and diminishing resources for cultural cover in both print and screen media. The expanding opportunities for online communications demand more time and new skills from the team and, while they multiply the channels and platforms available for communication, they also fragment the effectiveness of print.

5.2 Harnessing high-profile artistic assets

The Marketing and Communications department balance the need to sell maximum tickets with the need to promote a diverse range of shows which vary in terms of how established or known the artists or companies may be. The team has developed a complex system to do this. It sets targets, agreed with senior

managers, for each show or an average target for a run of a particular show. Venue capacity and income targets are balanced to create a budget based on projected income from ticket sales for the whole programme. In an interview on 15 January 2010, Westbrook described how the marketing is then planned in two campaigns: the first to make advance sales during the first 10 days priority booking after the launch and the early booking period; the second based on the patterns revealed by the first five weeks of early sales. Overall the potential to earn must be balanced by other considerations:

Some things are about brand - you don't want to create the idea that we are a dance festival predominantly. Each art needs support, we try to create a balance. You don't say we don't care if something isn't doing well, you care for the artist. Some things need nurtured even if there is not much money for us - but other shows we will push for box office. (Interview with Jackie Westbrook, 15 January 2010)

The challenge for the department is to achieve the right balance and, on limited resources, have the capacity to push the marketing budgets in two different directions. On the one hand, the team considers it a priority to give extra resource to shows which might need it because the company or performers are emergent or challenging and where early figures indicate that the box office may not be strong. On the other hand, there is the opportunity to take advantage if a show appears to have the potential to attract capacity audiences. Plans are based on the sales for the first few weeks which should follow the estimates and targets predicting how shows are going to sell. The professional skills of the team are deployed to reach targets but also to identify where more income can be generated and judge what methods to deploy.

New commissions, important in terms of innovation, are difficult to predict, even with long experience and careful research. Westbrook gave the example of marketing a new commission by Michael Clark in the 2009 Festival. In March 2009 there was no information to go in the brochure about what would be featured in the new show *Michael Clark - New Work*. The Scots born dancer and choreographer was returning to the EIF after twenty years and had been widely reported in the

media as having suffered drug problems which prevented him working for many years. Westbrook noted that he also had a reputation for being ‘very last minute’ about finalising his shows. *The Times* reported in March 2009 that Clark’s show for the Festival ‘remains an unknown quantity’ while at the same time quoting Jonathan Mills’ view on this as being: ‘That delights me. Michael can be refreshingly rebellious’ (Mills cited in Wade 2009: 23). To sell this flamboyant and *avant garde* performer’s new show, the Marketing department resorted to an old publicity photograph for the March brochure which could be updated with a new image when one was available.



Figure 7: Initial publicity.



Final publicity. EIF 2009

However, Westbrook admitted that the team initially got their predictions wrong:

I was too conservative, some under-performed but that over-performed - we could see that it would. So we did bus sites and exploited it. Because it was doing well we threw money at it. The Playhouse is enormous so we had the capacity. It’s all down to percentages - if the budget is set at 80% and it does well we can sell 20% more than predicted. But if we predicted 50% in a

large venue and it looks like it is doing well, then we can push that as there is more to be earned. (Interview with Jackie Westbrook, 15 January 2010)

The team worked all their resources to sell the Michael Clark show - including hand-outs to people in the street - as the venue had 12,000 seats for the run, which was a very big sell for contemporary dance. Westbrook reported that, in the event, the show proved to be a success at the 2009 Festival and while selling out completely at the Playhouse, the show achieved strong critical acclaim and went on to a successful run in London.

There were also other variations from predictions about new commissions. *The Last Witch* was a world premiere by a contemporary Scottish playwright in a three-week run at The Traverse Theatre. As the work was unknown the department expected to have to work to push beyond 50% sales but it sold well from the start. On the other hand, opera, an important component of the programme, which traditionally sells well early on, was slower than had been expected. Gilchrist noted in interview on 14 January 2010, that 'this year upfront sales were not so good as in the past. Eventually they came good but we had to push, we can't just hope.' In order to meet the challenge of unpredictability the department has improved its chances of correcting mistakes by creating the capacity to be flexible about the development of the second campaign. By using advanced sales patterns they can make informed decisions about how to adjust their priorities and take advantage of unexpected audience behaviour and of venue capacity.

A further challenge for the Marketing and Communications Department is that while the artistic stature and media profile of the artists and companies performing will assist in meeting sales targets there are many other factors in any given year which can affect sales and are beyond the EIF's control. For instance, in 2009 there were a number of potential negative aspects to the Edinburgh landscape, which could affect sales, and which were exhaustively documented in the local, national and international press:

- Economic downturn - a fear that audiences and visitors would stay at home or economise on cultural activities;

- Trams - a state of continuing chaos and disruption in the city due to roadworks which could discourage potential visitors;
- Bin-men - there was a much reported threat of a strike continuing during August and pictures of the city strewn with rubbish;
- Swine flu - there were fears of an epidemic which might affect audiences and artists and discourage visitors;
- Year of Homecoming - competitor or colleague?;
- Manchester International Festival reducing audiences for the EIF.

While the EIF shared vulnerability to these factors with other festivals in Edinburgh, the fact that the EIF has only a three-week window in August meant that there was potential for serious loss of income. In the event, box office figures for 2009 matched those for 2008, which had been the best year to date. To benefit fully from this, the Marketing and Communications department conducted research into whether and how buying patterns had changed.

They discovered that a change in buying habits was driven by people, at a time of economic austerity, seeking value for money. The 2010 figures showed an increase of take up on concessions and what Gilchrist termed the ‘generous’ ticket pricing strategy where pricing was kept at a level perceived to be affordable. Gilchrist guessed that it was still the same people buying but that they were knowledgeable about what was likely to sell out, e.g. shows on for only one night, and bought ‘must have’ tickets well in advance. For longer runs and less well known shows, people waited, and there was a second wave of sales. In view of this pattern the Marketing and Communication department’s strategy was to bring forward the information about concessions in the 2010 brochure making the pricing structure a prominent page at the front rather than putting it at the back.

A further strategic advertising campaign starts once the Festival opens with a series of half page press promotions in *The Herald* and *The Scotsman* offering 2 for 1 seats for those shows which need a push. These advertisements are free as they boost the sales of the papers. The department’s overall strategy to sell the Festival is to establish target sales for all shows, study buying patterns carefully from the launch of the brochure and maintain budget flexibility in order to create

balanced marketing campaigns which will support demand for new work and exploit demand for popular shows.

5.3 Use of new communications technologies

While opportunities for print coverage are difficult and decreasing, new media outlets have emerged. The biggest external change which offered a challenge to the Marketing and Communications department was identified as the ever proliferating new forms of technological communication and the demands on the EIF to stay ahead of the game because, as Westbrook noted on 15 January 2010, 'It is expected by our core audience and the way they think of us as first class, they expect world class service and world class facilities and communication.' Burnett acknowledged, on 22 January 2010, that there are increasing opportunities in terms of international platforms for coverage and for reaching particular audience segments, but remarked that 'endless opportunities for online engagement' require more staff and budgets to service them and it is difficult to gauge the return on, for example, the considerable resource put into servicing such opportunities as *The Huffington Post*.

Westbrook also noted that new forms of communication tend not to replace existing methods like print, but are in addition and, with a limited budget available for research, there are often difficult choices to be made between being an 'early adopter' which can mean risking resources on technology that may not be popular for long and waiting too long so that the organisation appears out of date. To guide strategy the department undertakes audience research every two years which continues to show that the first secondary source of information for customers is the website.²¹ Gilchrist confirmed that, as well as being a primary source of information about the programme, the website is also of increasing importance in

²¹ The internal Online Marketing report quoted the following viewing figures: 'April 2008: 37,086 total visits, 218,437 page views, 28,037 unique users: April 2009: 53,339 total visits, 650,424 page views, 41,300 unique users. 16% of traffic from new visitors, Twitter, Facebook and Blogger in top 20 referring URLs. Throughout this period there were a total of 472,091 visits to the website by 352,730 unique visitors and 2,036,691 pageviews. Visitors spent an average of 204 seconds on the site'.

terms of sales.²² To exploit the website as a marketing and sales tool, the team's priority is to maintain the look, content and functionality as continually fresh and dynamic by re-designing each year. Gilchrist noted that this is unusual for arts organisations but that it reflects the EIF's annual cycle of production which is refreshed by a new programme annually. EIF marketing staff maintain the site and input content and information into the templates, generating video files, audio files and *vox pop* which enhance the site even though, as he acknowledged, people are still basically using it to find out what is on and book tickets. To maintain competitiveness the team has had to acquire new skills and the department has a proactive strategy of 'future proofing' by regularly meeting the web designers to explore how people use the site and discuss what new approaches are needed.

In 2008 Mills announced a strategy to embrace the new technology which is increasingly available and has a range of potential applications for festivals. *The Times* reported that he had plans 'to place the Edinburgh International Festival at the heart of a broadband revolution in arts broadcasting' (Wade 2008). The article described how the EIF planned to deliver the arts in a wide variety of forms - podcasts, video downloads etc. - to a young audience. The Festival Director's aim was described as being about building bridges and robustly engaging with the world: 'I am trying to build an idea of this festival where we have audiences in places which are far removed from us. If the festival is to retain its prestige, its ingenuity and provide a unique dimension for artists and audiences alike, we have to be thinking about the world as it is today and starting to explore new relationships' (Wade 2008:). As part of this strategy the Marketing Department undertook an R&D initiative to explore online audience development through social networks and digital communication. In 2009 a six month post, as part of a job share with the Sydney International Festival, was appointed, with a brief to undertake a pilot during the 2009 Festival and manage two interns who were familiar with social networking systems. In a presentation to staff on 15 January 2010 the initiative, which essentially provided a new site, was presented as a move

²² Figures show that in 2008 during the priority period 60% of tickets were sold on line. On the first day of public sales 70% were sold online. This was an increase on all other years. In 2009 45% of the total number of tickets were sold online. (EIF Online Marketing Report 2009)

towards more collaboration with audiences who were described as having the potential to become contributors, co-producers, promoters and to provide user generated content - some of which might contribute content to the ebulletin. The 2009 Online marketing report produced for the Marketing and Communications department described the potential benefits of these new platforms as: communicating with audiences and building a community; engaging with the audience in new ways, and increasing audience reach.

The pilot ran a range of online interventions using Facebook, Twitter, Festival Insider Blog, Vimeo, YouTube, Flickr and an iCalender. Gilchrist confirmed on 14 January 2010 that the aim was not just to understand the technology itself but to explore how people use it. The subsequent EIF report on the use of online technology during 2009 confirmed that a number of the new initiatives had been fruitful and others less so. It stated that, while the Festival Insider Blog attracted 8,915 page loads during the Festival period with 6,821 unique visitors, it only had 3 followers. The strategies proposed to improve this were to engage in more marketing of the blog url, rather than just direct links from social networking sites, and also regular competitions on the blog to increase followers. According to the report, other sites were moderately successful and the team concluded that they needed to explore how to increase the amount of interaction with the sites.²³

While distanced to some extent from pure marketing initiatives, the pilot combined marketing and creation of content and Gilchrist reported that it changed the way the team looked at the website and stimulated exchange of ideas. He believed that the EIF was at the forefront of arts organisations in developing these forms of

²³‘The Edinburgh International Festival **Facebook** page had 2,278 fans on the 30th of August with demographic data for 2,214 fans (63% female, 34% male) signing on worldwide.flickr.com The [edintfest](http://edintfest.com) page has 325 items with 5,430 views in total. 22 users have added edintfest as a contact and 4 users have marked edintfest photos as favourites. **youtube.com** The [edinburghintfestival](http://edinburghintfestival.com) page has 269 videos watched, 21 subscribers and 1,324 channel views. The three most viewed videos were the Festival trailer (1,022 views), *The Return of Ulysses* Clip 1 (1,005) and *The Return of Ulysses* Clip 2 (452 views). **vimeo.com** The Edinburgh International Festival page has 22 videos and 5 subscribers. The three most played videos are the Festival trailer (163 plays), the Diaspora trailer (150 plays) and Director Mills introduces Festival 09 - Part 1 (101 plays). There were no likes and no comments on any video. As with the blog there is little interaction with these sites. It would be good to increase the amount of interaction by using the url in more marketing materials rather than only direct links from the webpage, Twitter and Facebook.’

communication and that the mere fact of doing it improved the reputation of the EIF and provided examples of good practice. This was confirmed by Anita Clark on 4 May 2010 whose view was that: 'the EIF treads very well that line between the informality that those mediums require and maintaining the organisation's integrity'. The final report showed good statistics overall and the team planned to assess what works best and consolidate these initiatives in 2010 concentrating on Facebook and Twitter and the post was incorporated into the Marketing team. However, this is new territory and the activity was costly in terms of staff time and resource and the learning process of trying things out and, inevitably, sometimes getting them wrong. For example, Gilchrist explained that in 2009 the whole music programme was put on Spotify. The team made a playlist of every piece of music in the Festival, which he described as being time consuming to set up, but take up was poor. The team concluded that the lesson learned was that it had not been publicised in the right way.

The EIF has been obliged, by the rapid advance of communication technologies, to engage with new platforms and familiarise staff with new ways of communicating. While this required more staff time and effort it was not clear how the team quantified the investment against the likelihood that it will pay off in the longer term by reaching new audiences. The Marketing and Communications department used annual reports to track all media coverage and social media usage and the Festival Director's ambition is to use these platforms for making work as well as for audience development. From 2009 - 2011 the department embarked on a strategy of testing the potential of new communications technology in terms of audience development using research and experimentation to try to maintain the EIF at the cutting edge and by March 2011 Festivals Edinburgh had achieved funding to pursue a partnership with Edinburgh University Infomatics Department to pursue new ways of communicating.

Advances in technology also offer greatly enhanced opportunities to develop sales. Hub Tickets, although technically part of the trading company, Edinburgh Festivals Centre Ltd. (EFC Ltd) is run by the Marketing and Communications department of the EIF and therefore part of the EIF's strategy for maintaining a competitive edge. Westbrook explained that the EIF has always had a strategy of selling through the

EIF box office and staff rather than through venues, as is more usual for festivals. When the EIF set up the EFC Ltd. to run The Hub they placed their box office operation in the business half of the organisation so that it could operate commercially as a ticketing agency as well as selling EIF tickets, with the Manager of Hub Tickets reporting to the Director of Marketing and Communications. A new initiative to create a city-wide ticketing portal online using the EIF and the other Edinburgh festivals as a pilot was initiated in 2009, managed by The Audience Business (TAB) and Festivals Edinburgh. This created even more demands on the Marketing and Communications team: Westbrook noted in interview on 15 January 2010 that 'Festivals Edinburgh is fantastic but resource-hungry and requires a lot of input from us'. The team were working on a joint box office which was planned to go online in 2010 and according to Westbrook 'anything that puts what we do in front of somebody else's customer is also an advantage, if they come across us when before they wouldn't have.'

Being an early adopter presents a challenge for the EIF Communications and Marketing team particularly in terms of technology. Westbrook described the tension between the desire to innovate and the need to husband the tight resources they have available for research and development. The EIF has the dilemma of not wanting to waste money on developing software for the website or Box Office which 'doesn't go anywhere'. But for Westbrook its vital to 'actively try to understand the future - not wait for it to happen. To try to make sure we are positioned in the best place'.

5.4 Analysis of Findings

In recent years the EIF has demonstrated a professional approach to the role that marketing, brand imaging, management of the press and engaging with new communication technologies plays in building visibility and in sustaining a competitive profile. Findings indicate that the number of specialist staff involved in functions related to marketing and media has increased significantly over recent years and, through the branding process, the organization as a whole now understands and is more involved with marketing and communication activity. There has been a shift in organizational culture to accommodate greater concern

at all levels with issues of profile management, including recognition of the importance of relational marketing.

The branding process has also meant that more attention has been devoted to the internal management of the organization, as well as to the management of its external presentation, resulting in an overall professionalisation of the organisation as discussed by Colbert (2011). Although the EIF, like many other arts organisations, operates at a high level of uncertainty due to unpredictable market responses, annual negotiations for funding with stakeholders and sponsors and other external factors outside its own control, the formulation of strategic plans, evidenced in the production of a detailed and ambitious Business Plan 2009-2012, illustrates that the EIF has developed a strong degree of internal stability (Mintzberg and McHugh 1985).

Interview evidence also suggests that a further benefit of the brand review exercises has been the highlighting and reinforcing of the EIF's own sense of its core artistic mission and agenda. The involvement of all staff in discussions of the Festival's high ambition and commitment to quality programming has been translated, through these processes, into a creative approach to running the organisation, promoting an innovative engagement with new demands including marketing and communications.

Theorists cite a willingness to introduce innovation as a key factor in an organisations's ability to gain and maintain a lead position (Kapferer 2008) and (Hooley, Saunders, Piercy 1998). In interviews EIF staff frequently used the term 'innovation' and, while there is a danger of it becoming drained of meaning by over use as has happened with 'creativity' (Schlesinger 2006; Bilton 2005) or replacing understanding of cultural value with a focus on experimentation and novelty (Cunningham et al 2008; Oakley 2009)) the evidence suggests that the organisation has developed a culture where the ability to work flexibly and welcome the genuinely new as well as engage with contemporary interpretation and interrogation of the classics is seen as supporting the core values of the EIF. This may be due to the periodic injection of re-vitalising energy from a new Festival Director who is at the apex of the organisation. Also, putting together and

producing a completely new Festival programme each year demands flexibility and the ability to think in new ways from all staff. When discussing the management process Westbrook noted on 14 January 2010 that 'it's because we keep trying new things that we have managed to keep going. Management is as innovative as the programme, or at least has the same values'. However, the ability to innovate, while positioning the EIF well to convert change into opportunities, cannot insulate the Festival from its vulnerability to many factors outside its control, including the political changes in the UK which have reduced budgets and the changing media landscape, particularly in Scotland.

The positive changes achieved by the gradual re-direction of resources and staff energies towards marketing, brand management and engaging with new communication technologies could also mean that other activities and priorities are being diluted or displaced. The EIF's core mission is to create an international programme of high quality every year and the focus on marketing has taken place in the context of a financial situation where Mills acknowledged, on 23 September 2009, that he can rarely afford to commission new work for the programme, 'it is the worst funded festival in Europe, I can hardly co-produce anything'. Kapferer (2008) and De Chernatony (2001) warn that a brand, particularly one which promises an experience, will not succeed if the product personality loses its uniqueness or the product declines in credibility.

A further possible concern raised by more resource being put into the management of the EIF's external profile is that, to the extent that consistent image management is prioritised, there may be some risk that, instead of the brand reflecting the mission of the EIF, this situation becomes reversed and the programme becomes led by marketing strategies focused on maximizing sales. There is also the danger that the crucial innovation and cutting edge aspects of the programme, which are more challenging for customers, could be distorted or diluted by inappropriate marketing (Kapferer 2008) resulting in customer confusion and disappointment. The evidence of interviews is, however, that the Marketing and Communications department has a clear commitment to putting marketing effort into articulating the more challenging aspects of the programme as well as fully exploiting those shows which are likely to sell well. Mills' commitment to

programming which has an intellectual impetus, rather than simply assembling a showcase of starry items, also appears to invite a critical engagement by the audience rather than relying on marketing the festival as an uncomplicated celebration.

Findings indicate that, despite the risks outlined above, a steady increase in the deployment of marketing and communications activities over the last decade has not appeared to detract from the organisation's focus on the festival programme but that the whole marketing operation has been invested, in so far as this is possible, with the values of the core mission. The internal *Evaluation of 2009 Edinburgh International Festival media coverage* reported that 46% of the coverage carried 'quality of programme' as its key message which was closely followed by internationalism, unique opportunities and risk taking. This appears to be a positive result in the context of the range of coverage, much of which will be predominantly information based. It suggests that the EIF has achieved a reasonable percentage of serious critical coverage that communicates the key messages which reflect the EIF's core mission and this is supported by the findings of the *Edinburgh Festivals Impact Survey* (BOP 2011).

Within the organisation I found little evidence that the expense of the branding exercise and its demands on staff time have engendered any resentment or concern amongst staff or stakeholders, even though it could be considered as a re-direction of resources from programme. Instead, it is interpreted as a strategic response to a range of new demands and opportunities and interviews indicated that it is accepted as an essential priority - a consequence of the changed and far more competitive international environment for festivals which has been demonstrated by recent independent research. The provenance of this research and the implications of its findings for the EIF will be examined in the following chapter which considers other priorities and roles which have emerged for festivals in recent years and how the EIF has contributed to this new operational environment.

CHAPTER SIX - A STRATEGY OF PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

6.1 Introduction

Fuelled by the arrival of new players both internationally and within the UK, an increasingly competitive market environment for international festivals has encouraged organisations to explore a variety of means of creating advantage for themselves. The previous chapter focused on how, in order to sustain its competitive edge, the EIF has made a considerable investment in enhancing its marketing, branding and communications strategies over time and considered what the implications have been for the Festival as an organisation. This chapter examines how international festivals are increasingly recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities to create advantage through relationships of partnership and collaboration with a widening range of external bodies. The motives and drivers of this development and how it has been implemented in Scotland are explored.

The general weight of evidence suggests that a gradual shift in the attitudes and perceptions of public funding bodies has instigated a change in the EIF's relationships towards becoming much more collaborative in recent years. How this has affected the festivals: what role they have played in the formulation and implementation of developing partnership; and, what its effect has been on relationships between the EIF and the other major international festivals in Edinburgh is considered in this chapter. It also examines how the ability to develop international partnerships and improve networking and collaboration is also assuming increasing importance for festivals, both in terms of exchanging research and expertise as outlined by Klaic (2009:103) and Pachter and Landry (2001), but also in artistic and financial terms. The chapter is organized in four sections that examine aspects of the EIF's strategies of partnership and collaboration which have acquired increased significance in recent years and how change has affected the EIF as an organisation and the broader cultural and political environment in which the festivals in Edinburgh operate. The sections address the development of

partnership and collaboration with: public stakeholders (6.2); corporate sponsors (6.3); rivals (6.4) and international bodies (6.5).

6.2 Partnerships with public stakeholders - ‘and then we realized we were all on the same side’²⁴

A significant factor in the evolution of a new approach to partnership with the local authority has been CEC’s growing recognition of the economic significance of the festivals, its need to market Edinburgh as a city and its need to be accountable for the investment of public funds in cultural activity. As discussed in Chapter Two, these changes were driven by the development of a discourse of cultural and creative industries which, since the 1980s, identified cultural activities as potential drivers of what is now termed the creative economy and encouraged local authorities to get involved in the exploitation of cultural projects. CEC was already a pioneer in its support for the EIF and the other major international festivals which were established in its wake and became a primary instigator of change from 1999 when it published *Towards the New Enlightenment: a Cultural Policy for the City of Edinburgh*, (1999). This was described in interview on 29 June 2010 by Lynne Halfpenny, Head of the Culture and Sport Department at CEC, (and Arts Officer at CEC in 1999), as a crucial turning point in policy which contained the triggers for subsequent change.

The most significant of these for the festivals was the establishment of a Cultural Partnership. This was a concept advocated in a number of local authority policy documents in the UK at the time and appeared to be primarily a strategy to manage a shortage of funds. City of Edinburgh Council’s cultural policy document acknowledged that the context was ‘a changing environment for local Government, with decreasing resources and increasing obligations’ (CEC 1999:1). This document presented the partnership as ‘a significant new vehicle for collaborative working’ so that the city’s cultural community would be able to ‘speak with a collective voice’ (ibid). From providing all services directly the Council proposed to move to

²⁴ Phrase used by Lynne Halfpenny, Head of Culture and Sport, City of Edinburgh Council, in an interview on 29 June 2010.

collaboration in cultural activity and to find ‘new ways of working’ through partnership. The starting point for this policy was a period of reduction in local authority funding and the strategy could have been interpreted as pious rhetoric designed to mask these reductions. It appeared to be an unpromising impetus for a change in relationships between the city and the arts constituency as it was clearly designed to encourage arts organisations to move from dependency on CEC and seek additional resources for cultural activities elsewhere and thus promoted a more instrumental and market driven approach to cultural policy.

CEC advanced the partnership agenda by calling a meeting with the Joint Festivals Working Group (JFWG), an informal voluntary grouping of the Festival Directors which the EIF had instigated in 1992. That this was not an easy option at the time was confirmed by Halfpenny in the interview cited above. She explained that the festivals were funded by different departments within the City Council and that officials ‘worked in their own silos and perhaps didn’t give enough thought to the impact of their decisions.’ She described the relationships between the various council officials and the Festival Directors they funded as ‘respectful but quite tense’. CEC had no previous history or experience of working across departments or with the Festival Directors collectively and Halfpenny acknowledged that ‘it was a daunting thought and my knees were knocking going down the road to that first meeting’.

She noted that it was the 1999 cultural policy document which had established the value of the festivals, both culturally and economically, that persuaded CEC to instigate an immediate consultation on developing a strategy for the festivals. A contributory factor which influenced this move was that the director of the Fringe had decided to change his festival dates without reference to the other festivals ‘and people were less than comfortable with the decision, it prompted the need to be more open and understand what it meant for the city’. The *Edinburgh Festivals Strategy* (GDA, 2001) marked the beginning of a strategic rationalization of support by CEC for the international festivals collectively because of the need to capitalize more effectively on their success.

While for Halfpenny and colleagues at the CEC the task of beginning to work in partnership had appeared formidable, it was equally difficult for the Festival Directors, who saw each other as competitors, to countenance the call to work in collaboration with CEC and with each other. Faith Liddell, then Director of the International Book Festival, noted:

The partnership story began with the Festival Strategy. So it was the city, it was *policy* that brought all the festivals together. They were forced to do it because they didn't want a structure to be created without them being involved. All had to be involved and all started working in a different way. (Interview with Faith Liddell, Chief Executive, Festivals Edinburgh, 14 July, 2010)

Halfpenny confirmed that the effect of working in a different way changed relationships: 'Only when we began to work as a team, and build teams ... with knowledge, mutual respect and trust began to grow, we were beginning to communicate, and then we realised we were all on the same side.' The evidence put forward by interviewees confirms that the participants quickly recognised how a policy of co-operation and partnership could bring results as they saw that they could work collectively to demonstrate the economic importance of the festivals and argue for more investment in cultural activities.

The *Edinburgh Festivals Strategy* (Graham Devlin Associates, 2001) also put the argument that, in an international market place which was becoming increasingly competitive, the festivals sector would most effectively be supported by developing better partnership with and between all the funding agencies which had an interest in promoting the city. The driving impetus of the report was to demonstrate value for CEC investment and, in providing evidence, it produced figures which demonstrated that Edinburgh's festivals compared well to their British peers in terms of the value they offered to the city for the subsidy they received from CEC. Similarly, 'in international terms, the economic impacts produced by the festivals compared favourably with the outputs of other European cities' (GDA, 2001:29). The report featured the first appearance of the specific brand designation 'Edinburgh Festival City' and prompted CEC to commission an

Economic Impact Study in 2004 to provide further evidence on the impact of their investment in Edinburgh's festivals. It was one of the first evaluations of the economic impact of festivals in the UK²⁵ and proved an influential milestone in stimulating competitors to produce their own impact studies.

The *Economic Impact Report on the Edinburgh Festivals* (SQW:2004) presented a positive case in favour of investment and was influential in persuading CEC and the Scottish Government of the economic value of supporting Edinburgh's festivals. Notwithstanding theoretical critiques of such studies on conceptual and methodological grounds as discussed in Chapter Two (Snowball and Bragge 2008; Galloway 2008; Johnson and Sack 1996; Seaman 1987), the report made a persuasive case for the value of the festivals and this was noted by other local authorities in England and abroad. The Festival Directors duly identified that increasing local authority investment in competitor festivals was a reason for further action:

Because we were out and about we already had a sense there were other threats, we knew the Economic Impact Evaluation had triggered imitation. Alarm bells began to ring with the festivals first. Then, because of the city's investment, it began to ring alarm bells with the city and with Government. (Interview with Faith Liddell, 14 July 2010)

The next stage of the partnership strategy was therefore to persuade CEC to commission research to make recommendations on how the festivals could stay ahead of competitors. Significantly, the study was commissioned by a broader partnership of stakeholders which included CEC, SAC and the tourism and enterprise bodies, EventScotland and Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothians (SEEL). This new alliance illustrated how a developing recognition of overlapping and shared interests in sustaining Edinburgh's pre-eminent position as a Festival city, in the face of a growing tide of competition, propelled stakeholders towards a widening range of partnerships. As a result *Thundering Hooves - Maintaining the*

²⁵ The first was *The economic and social impact of cultural Festivals in the East Midlands of England* commissioned by ACE and the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) (Maughan 2009:51)

global edge of Edinburgh's Festivals (Thundering Hooves) was commissioned from AEA Consultants and published in 2006. It was crucially important not least because the festivals took ownership of it:

Thundering Hooves was not done *to* us, it was done *with* us and largely instigated by the festivals. Its genesis was the festivals talking about the competition at a time when the stakeholders didn't necessarily understand the threat. (Interview with Joanna Baker, 23 September 2010)

The report surveyed the extent to which the position of the festivals in Edinburgh was likely to be affected by the phenomenon of 'a burgeoning number of festivals, both in the United Kingdom and overseas' (AEA 2006:2). It contained an Action Plan and it concluded that, in view of the sustained development of actively competitive cities, 'over a time span of the next five to seven years, Edinburgh's current enviable position as a pre-eminent festival city is vulnerable' (ibid:8). *Thundering Hooves* is essentially about sustaining the brand value of Edinburgh as 'the Festival City,' and the Edinburgh City Region Brand - 'Edinburgh Inspiring Capital' - which was launched in May 2005.

However, despite a common interest amongst stakeholders in promoting the position of the Edinburgh festivals sector, the Report could not completely represent the concerns and aspirations of all partners. For example establishing economic impacts was a high priority to some members of the partnership whereas for others the ideal of securing investment in quality artistic programming was a more pressing concern. An important part of the process was the negotiation of different agendas.

In interview on 23 September 2010, Baker confirmed that 'while the Festival Directors didn't get the financial parameters they wanted, it was an important process involving all the key players, and in fact the process was as important as the end result'. Clark confirmed, in interview on 4 May 2010, that the actual process of working together on the report produced an 'eventual sense of ownership'. She described 'the galvanising moment when we got the interim report and it was collectively hated by all' and the ensuing swift re-drafting

process which united the festivals in arguing that their first and central aim was that of ensuring that the festivals were able to produce international quality work. The festivals established, through negotiation, the key principle that the evidence presented in the report was there to support the cultural argument, which was that the ability of the festivals to promote international quality programming was paramount:

It was a really important thing for everyone involved, to have it stated that you can look at structures and strategic approaches, but ultimately it is the *quality* of the festivals' programmes which will enable them to retain a pre-eminent position. (Interview with Anita Clark, Lead Officer for the EIF at SAC, 4 April 2010)

The report therefore focused on 'the creation and marketing of internationally competitive programming' and 'sustaining a consistent international quality threshold for all festivals' (AEA 2006:9). Later recommendations concern the strategic promotion of the festivals worldwide through the brand 'Edinburgh, the Festival City' and the development of a joint festivals marketing strategy.

For Halfpenny, the report's first recommendation, which was to set up an on-going forum to monitor the progress of Edinburgh as a Festival City and oversee the investment required to sustain its position, was crucial to the success of the strategy. She noted in the interview cited above that, for CEC at the time, establishing the Festivals Forum was 'an incredibly mature development, creating another structure which everyone can feed into - incredibly potentially powerful'. From this evidence it can be inferred that the introduction of this additional chamber to articulate and oversee the City's investment strategies appeared to the Council to be a very radical move, an inference supported by the evolving history of the EIF's relationships with CEC which is referenced in Chapter Three. In 2007 the Festivals Forum was established to keep the festivals and their stakeholders aware of the need to direct investment towards specific competitive challenges. In 2009 its members were the Scottish Government, SEEL, SAC, CEC, EventScotland, VisitScotland and external members from the British Council Scotland. Halfpenny

confirmed that in 2010 it had achieved impressive interaction with the processes of the Council.

The success of the cultural partnership in promoting the City of Edinburgh as a destination for visitors can be demonstrated by numerous recent awards (Birse 2010:9)²⁶ many of which cite the festivals as a particular draw for visitors, however sustaining the partnership is a complex project. For example, CEC has been criticised for its policy priority of partnering the larger players through the Festivals Strategy which, it is argued, could be detrimental to overall cultural provision in the city:

The EIF doesn't necessarily help the arts in Edinburgh. The audience will go to everything in the Festival and not for the rest of the year. Having the Festival here from the public purse point of view - they spend less on other arts infrastructure, it sucks audiences away, it doesn't, necessarily, help. It should open their minds and points of view but there is an audience in Edinburgh that just goes for the festival. (Interview with Matthew Studdert- Kennedy, Arts Administrator, EIF, 14 January 2010)

Halfpenny countered this argument in the interview cited above by saying that the festivals 'have helped to protect my budgets. Festivals support the venues and support other work'. This refers to CEC support for the infrastructure of venues crucial to delivering the EIF programme and available all year round for other arts events, whether funded by CEC or not, offering audiences a wider range of programmes.²⁷ The *Edinburgh Festivals Strategy* supports the view that the festivals benefit the arts in Scotland, arguing that they introduce international artists, new ideas and the highest international standards to Scottish artists and audiences (GDA 2001:19). The *Edinburgh Festivals: Impact Study*, (BOP Consulting 2011) also provides evidence which counters the notion that support for the festivals starves other arts activity in the city. It found that the festivals as a whole, and the EIF in particular, make an important economic contribution to the

²⁶ Examples cited include: "Best place to visit", "Best place to live and work", "Top Hotel Occupancy outside London", "Premier Business Tourism Destination" (Birse 2010:9).

²⁷ The venues are Usher Hall, Festival Theatre, King's Theatre, Queen's Hall, Playhouse.

range of cultural venues that are involved in hosting events throughout the year and that in this way they build audiences through their impact on cultural participation more widely, in particular audiences' year-round attendance. Further research would be needed to compare CEC's cultural provision with that of other cities, for instance Glasgow, which do not support a similar range of festivals, to gauge whether support for the festivals unbalances more broadly based cultural provision.

While CEC may take pride in the benefits that promoting partnership has brought, there are limitations to what can be achieved as there are inevitable differences in the missions and agendas of the funders, those of individual festivals and those of the wider arts constituency, which remain a source of frustration. A difference in the timescales within which organisations operate is one example. While CEC's procedures are geared to giving annual grants, EIF's planning spans several years. The EIF's ability to market in advance and to raise funds for co-commissions and other aspects of programme can be compromised by this, and, unless this basic aspect of funding procedures can be changed, it is difficult for the EIF to achieve effective advance fundraising and marketing.

More fundamentally, despite the evidence, provided by all comparative reports produced over the last decade, that the EIF is under-resourced compared to other international festivals, the situation appears likely to continue. Frequent media reports of CEC's performance in many sectors, including the cultural, identify that CEC itself is part of the problem. Sir Terry Farrell, hired as Edinburgh's 'design tsar' and frustrated by lack of progress in his task, blamed 'introverted negativity and a concentration on the small scale and the short term - pervading inertia' in an article in *The Scotsman* (Ferguson 2009:17) and claimed that the city was in desperate need of vision and leadership. The *Edinburgh Festivals Strategy* also highlighted this lack of vision resulting in inadequate support for the festivals: 'All indicators suggest that the Edinburgh festivals as a group receive significantly less investment than their peers and, indeed, considerably less than in the past' (GDA 2001:pvi). The same problem was further detailed in the pmp report commissioned in 2007 to make recommendations on improving the venue infrastructure in the city. Jonathan Mills also expressed frustration:

There is no chance of the City Council listening. It's spent hundreds of millions on trams and doesn't do what is needed. For a fraction of that amount they could have spent on theatres and a festival infra-structure that would actually pay for itself. . . It's the Scottish psyche - dourness. It can't be seen to be spending on frivolous activities. In a city like Singapore, if we had a quarter of the success we have we would get ten times the amount. (Interview with Jonathan Mills, 3 February 2010)

While partnership with CEC had its limits, the EIF's partnership with SAC and the Scottish Government also became closer during the period 1999-2011, which was a time of great changes for both bodies. SAC was a ready participant in CEC's cultural partnership strategy since its major review of the EIF in 1995 had already advocated more partnership with other festivals and organisations like the tourist agencies. At the same time the concept of 'matched funding' had also begun to appear in the criteria for SAC grant applications. This required applicants to show that they would raise a percentage of matching, or partnership, funding for projects rather than expecting SAC to cover all costs. This strategy of partnership therefore became the *modus operandi* for most cultural activity and many of the Regional Arts Boards and local authorities in England from the 1980s on initiated successful projects. It was introduced into the criteria for Lottery funding when it came on stream in the 1990s confirming the way that local and national government funding for the arts had moved from patronage to partnership.

From 2003 to 2010, SAC was also in a state of transition as the government directed amalgamation of SAC and Scottish Screen into Creative Scotland suffered a number of hiccups on its way to becoming a legality. Clark confirmed, in the interview cited above, that, to protect core clients in this difficult period, SAC introduced a new three year funding plan to provide stability for long term planning, an important advantage for the EIF as noted above. She indicated that transition also allowed some procedural flexibility as SAC was able to agree an uplift in funding to EIF in 2009, at executive level, in a way which might not have been possible under more settled circumstances or at a later time of financial constraint. The agreement on three year funding was carried over into Creative Scotland in July 2010 and Baker confirmed that it was successfully re-negotiated for 2012.

A commitment to partnership also appears prominently as a key aspect of the way Creative Scotland intends to operate. In its inaugural website it identifies partnership as a key strategy and the EIF as one of its main partners, along with local authorities, broadcasters and investment agencies like Scottish Enterprise (<http://www.creativescotland.com>).²⁸ This reflects local authority practice and while it appears a sensible strategy to make cultural budgets go farther, the evidence suggests that, for arts organisations, partnership can bring with it a defusing of control and an increase in bureaucratic procedures. Partnership makes it less straightforward to make decisions: partners will have differing agendas, time scales and procedures to demonstrate accountability, and achieving action may involve negotiation and compromise. The administrative and managerial burden for arts organisations is high if rarely quantified.

The EIF's other significant public partner was the newly devolved Scottish Government which proved interventionist in cultural matters. From 1997 to 2010, ten different Ministers presided over the Culture portfolio, a Cultural Commission to advise on how the arts should be managed was appointed in 2004 (and, after consultation, published over 130 recommendations), four Cultural Policy Strategies were published and two draft Culture Bills were presented for consultation to the arts constituency and for endorsement by the Scottish Parliament. The national companies were brought into direct Government control and the radical move of establishing Creative Scotland by dismantling SAC and Scottish Screen was accomplished. Hopes that the establishment of a Scottish Government would herald a renaissance in government support for cultural activity were, to some extent, destabilized by the rapid succession of Ministers responsible for Culture and by a lack of clarity on what Creative Scotland's role would be, but devolution brought closer relationships between government and the festivals and their stakeholders. Baker described how the EIF had seized the opportunities presented by devolution to engage with the Scottish Government directly, as a potential cultural partner, and worked to develop cordial relationships with the growing team of civil servants in the Culture department. The jointly developed new

²⁸ Accessed 2 June 2011.

structures of the Festival Forum and Festivals Edinburgh also provided effective channels for promoting the festival partnership with the Scottish Government.

This strategy meant that, when the SNP took power in 2007 and made a significant cultural intervention by creating the Edinburgh Festival Expo Fund to promote Scottish work at the festivals, senior staff at the EIF already knew the civil servants tasked with making this fund work. The Expo Fund was a £6 million commitment over a period of three years from 2008 - 2011 to fund innovative programming which would showcase Scotland's creative talent at the Edinburgh festivals. The government aims for the Fund were to raise the international profile of Scotland's creativity through ambitious projects. Faith Liddell, Director of Festivals Edinburgh, explained how closer engagement with civil servants meant that the EIF and other festivals were able to be proactive in the process of drawing up the criteria relating to promoting Scottish work and thus broadening the scope of the fund:

international collaborations with artists were embraced from the beginning - we have influenced that - if you want to export, have a platform for Scottish artists, its about international opportunities and co-production, connections between organisations need to be embraced and allowed. (Interview, Faith Liddell, 14 July 2010)

The EIF's partnership with the other festivals meant that it was able to negotiate a leading role in guiding how the fund should be administered and influencing the criteria on which the bids were awarded. Lead Officer for the EIF at SAC/Creative Scotland, Anita Clark, confirmed on 4 May 2010 that working together on this 'issued in a new relationship with government which brought a massive change' and argued that the festivals were able to guard against the government using the Fund for its own ends and to 'find ways of satisfying those new demands' by 'coming at things from a different perspective'. She acknowledged that considerable negotiation was required, sometimes through the Festival Forum, in order to achieve what SAC and the festivals wanted. In Clark's view a further reason for the EIF to be 'actively engaging with government and working hard to do so' was that the national opera, ballet and orchestral companies were now closer

to government as they had been transferred to direct support in 2006, and that the EIF and other arts organisations therefore needed to make more effort to get their voices heard.

The Expo Fund was launched with SAC administering it on behalf of the Scottish Government. In terms of the EIF, Clark noted that, while they had been successful in a modest bid during the first year, the committee had let the EIF know that they were looking for more ‘adventurous’ projects in the future. This indicates that there was a tension between the concern to stimulate innovation and the pressure to announce immediate results which inevitably accompanies such government sponsored initiatives - while they wanted to announce ambitious projects in the first year, the time scale was not well geared to what the EIF would need in order to put together an innovative international commission.

The festivals, through Festivals Edinburgh, made a joint effort to prevent the kind of problems which could emerge if the government took direct control of the Fund, delegated it inappropriately or attempted to influence decisions about which bids to the fund would be successful. In the successful management of the Expo Fund SAC offered a contrast to another instance of cultural intervention by the SNP Government in 2009, The Year of Homecoming, referred to in Chapter Five. This aimed to bring visitors to Scotland during a year-long programme of celebration throughout the country and had, as its centre piece, *The Gathering*, which was held in Edinburgh in August at festival time. It was billed as a ‘meeting of the clans’ and in its affinity and bloodline oriented conception and promotion it appeared to fully satisfy Nairn’s description of a deformed culture with its backward looking aura of tartanry and romantic chest beating (Nairn 2003). The event ended in controversy as the private company which was put in charge of organizing it, went bankrupt and left many suppliers unpaid, prompting a flurry of newspaper articles chronicling a saga of mismanagement and denial.²⁹

²⁹ *The Scotsman* ran the headline ‘Cock-up or cover-up claim on Gathering news release’ on 4 November 2010 followed by ‘You liars: MP accuses Edinburgh leaders over Gathering’ on 10 March 2011.

The careful negotiation of criteria and appropriate structure for administration of the Expo Fund described by Clark, Liddell and Baker, avoided such cultural pitfalls and by 2010 the scheme had reached its third and final year and the festivals were anxious that it should be continued, or that something else similar should be put in its place. However, the scheme was linked to the government achieving profile and credibility with voters, its fortunes were tied to the government's own and therefore volatile. In the SNP's Autumn 2010 Budget the Expo Fund agreement was renewed for a further year which allowed breathing space for 2011 but the question of what funding would be available to create augmented programmes for 2012 and 2014 remained open. When the SNP was elected with a majority in May 2011 a further renewal was made from 2011 to 2014, indicating a recognition by government, if modest in monetary terms, of the role cultural organisations play in enhancing the profile of Scotland as a creative nation able to compete internationally. However, the uncertainty about whether or not it would continue made it difficult for the festivals to make ambitious forward plans for international collaborations. While the Expo Fund is an example of a successful partnership with government, it also illustrates that such successes are vulnerable to the short terms of political life and will.

The weight of evidence indicates that the cultural partnership in Edinburgh was embraced by the festivals and that, consequently, the initiative appears to have had significant successes. However, there are clearly limits to the extent to which the festivals, all with distinctive remits and major ambitions, can achieve open and full consensus in their working relations with public funders, who have limited cultural budgets and work within a highly political environment. Although a more collaborative interface with these public funders brings advantage in demonstrating legitimacy and the effectiveness of public investment and has resulted in marginally improved budgets for culture at times of comparative prosperity, each international festival still faces challenges in the pursuit and implementation of its own independent agenda and vision. The evidence also suggests that these same challenges were also manifesting themselves in the realm of partnerships with private stakeholders.

6.3 Partnerships with sponsors - ‘tea with Helen Mirren’³⁰

Not only has the EIF’s relationship with public funders changed, but changes to its links and ties with corporate and individual sponsors have accelerated over the same period. Evidence gathered from interviews with the staff at the EIF suggests that more investment in servicing sponsors may be needed at a time when overall budgets are being cut. In 2010 the EIF was affected by economic and political events in the UK and Scotland as well as changes in the corporate sector that were beyond its control. Long term sponsoring partnerships were disturbed or coming to an end at a time when cuts to public funding from CEC and Creative Scotland intensified the pressure on the EIF to find alternative sources of funding.

The whole climate for corporate sponsorship was also changing. Colin Tweedy, Chief Executive of Arts and Business, was quoted in the press as saying that he does not expect private funding to increase between 2010 and 2013 (Appleyard 2010:15). Baker, in an interview on 23 September 2010, corroborated that projections for sponsorship in Scotland for 2011 and 2012 showed that corporate money was likely to go down, and that this is a pattern which has been developing for some time. She noted that fewer big corporates are based in Scotland and many may no longer even be in the UK as a result of mergers. She gave the example of Scottish & Newcastle which is now owned by Heineken and run from Holland and noted that ‘realistically, we don’t get support from corporates not based in Scotland’.

Recognising a need to face new challenges, Mills had appointed a new Director of Sponsorship and Development in 2008. Christopher Wynn had previous experience of fund raising in America which included a more developed approach to maximizing corporate and individual support for arts and cultural activity since, as he noted in interview on 13 January 2010 ‘only about 10% of funding comes from the state’. Wynn described how, as well as the specific changes in Scotland referred to above, the general trend in relationships with sponsors had changed: ‘it

³⁰ Phrase used by Christopher Wynn, Sponsorship and Development Director, interviewed on 14 January 2010.

used to be about parties and entertainment, art for art's sake, people gave you money and felt they had done their duty'. He suggested that partnerships had now changed from being solely about delivery of patronage to a more collaborative relationship involving reciprocation of benefits. He described how philanthropic giving had begun to mesh with highly developed marketing expectations and corporates had begun to demand significantly raised profile for their brand generally. He acknowledged that this new emphasis on marketing opportunities put pressure on the department to find new strategies for engaging with sponsors, resulting in some tensions around the need to balance the sponsor's agenda with protecting the core mission of the EIF.

Wynn pointed to the growing popularity of the EIF's Programme Development work which offered sponsors the benefits of outreach to additional educational markets and to communities all year round and 'something tangible and worthy' to point to in their final reports. While sponsors were keen to support this safer area of the EIF's work he explained that it could be difficult to get support for the actual art, particularly more experimental work, with its less predictable impacts and outcomes. He explained that this was an important issue for the sponsorship department who were concerned to protect the core mission of the EIF even in difficult times. Wynn was clear that, although he knew it would always be possible to get funding from a sponsor like Culture Ireland if Irish work was part of the Festival programme, the department maintained a commitment to artistic ambition and he confirmed on 22 June 2011, that neither the availability of funding nor the known preferences of the audiences were allowed to dictate programming: 'art drives the process. We are not at the point where we have to pander to audience for ticket sales'.

Wynn and Baker agreed that the recession also accelerated the trend towards more market oriented forms of partnerships and away from corporate entertainment. While this meant developing new strategies, Baker saw advantages for the EIF in having to be more aware of what the benefits and returns of association were and of tailoring them to companies' business objectives. She noted in an interview on 23 September 2010 that, in a climate of austerity and more corporate opportunities for brand enhancements, 'we have to think harder than parties: what are both

sides getting out of it, what are the objectives? We need to be less lazy, more interrogative. It is likely to develop longer term relationships because we can give a more obvious immediate return.’ In interview on 13 January 2010 Wynn noted that, while the EIF initially responded to this change by offering sponsors a range of employee benefits in the form of employee engagement programmes including free tickets and discounts for shows, this seemed to achieve less buy in. To illustrate this, he gave examples of shows with sold out houses and 40 prime seats empty because sponsors had not turned up and of sponsors not attending catered seated dinners. Instead, he identified the latest trend in partnerships as a demand for the ‘can’t buy’ experience and gave the example of wealthy individuals wanting tickets for sold out shows and expecting to meet performers after the show.

This means that the department is under pressure to think up inspired ideas to make sponsors feel special which, to be successful, need increasing co-operation from artists appearing at the festival. When asked if this created new pressures for staff and for artists, Wynn indicated that, for the most part, artists ‘understood that this was the game, opera singers and conductors are familiar with patronage’. However this trend had the potential to conflict with EIF’s core commitment to treat artists with the highest respect and consideration - as noted by Baker on 23 September 2010, ‘we don’t expect the artists to sell the festival as well as everything else’.

In the interview cited above Wynn described how, recognising the need for new initiatives, since he believed that Trust and Foundation giving would also eventually shrink, he had embarked on a new strategy in 2010 to develop major corporate giving and to promote a culture of individual giving based on the American model of philanthropy. Although individual giving is well established in the States, and Wynn had experience of working in this field, it was at that stage more or less non-existent in the UK. Wynn explained that part of this strategy to encourage individual giving to the EIF is a new membership scheme - IN - launched in 2010 through a partnership with *The Skinny*, a Scottish independent entertainment and listings magazine which promotes cultural activities and life styles to a demographic of young people interested in culture and art. The EIF

published an offer in *The Skinny* to join the new membership scheme which featured ‘exclusive ticket offers and great money-cant-buy experiences’ offering social pleasures that are twitter-able and facebook-able. Wynn was clear that the objective was primarily audience development at this early stage with the long term aim of setting up a pattern of patronage which will eventually result in individual giving at a later stage in life.



Figure 8. Logo for IN

However, he acknowledged that giving priority to this ambitious initiative, which could only be seen as a long term investment at a time of considerable pressure to find alternative income streams, was a strategy which demanded nerve and faith in the future: ‘how do you measure success on that? You can’t predict into the future, how much money they might give long term. It is a game for the good of the art, maybe also for the good of the organisation, but maybe not.’

In interview on 22 June 2011, Wynn also described a further development of individual giving based on US strategies where individuals need to give money away to ‘make them tax efficient’ (he noted that 70% of all not-for-profit organisations in the US are funded by individuals). The initiative is headed by Mills and Wynn who target people who can be asked to give between £5,000 and £15,000. Targeted individuals are ‘those who have a relationship with you or interest in what you are doing’ and it is a question of matching products to individuals. He stressed that this is not a matter of writing letters ‘you travel and you have lunch, which is usually closing the deal’. Wynn explained that currently Mills asks for six figures and above, and he does the rest. He noted that this will change eventually but that currently a major gift in Edinburgh is £10,000, whereas in London people are used to being asked for £25,000 or £50,000 so ‘here it is a bit easier as the ask is small’.

The department is hoping that individuals who give will make regular gifts which might increase each year. However, such relationships require servicing with ticket requests, party invitations, lunches and personalised packages and therefore more resources from the department.

In interview on 23 September 2010 Baker noted that this was also a year when long term partnerships with sponsors, which the EIF had historically relied upon, were threatened due to changes in the sector. She explained that some major three year sponsorship deals were coming to an end, e.g. Standard Life, a long term supporter, which was going through structural change and a major cost cutting exercise. Baker was clear that, in order to replace some of the larger three year sponsorship deals of £50,000 - £100,000 per annum, the Sponsorship and Development department might need to develop at least five new deals, since it was expected that they would, at least initially, be for less. She indicated that the trend was now to 'a more diverse, wider corporate base, that could be the launch pad for increasing levels but it may be that corporates support at a lower level, so you have to have a broader base, is the pattern in future'.

In the interview on 22 June 2011, Wynn confirmed that, over the 18 months from 2009, corporate sponsorship had, to some extent, remained stagnant but that some new relationships were established with Virgin Money, HSBC and Shell. However he felt that, in general, people are 're-assessing sponsorship budgets' and 'philanthropy is now clearly seen as an extension of marketing' which meant that the department must therefore satisfy new demands. He gave the example of establishing a new relationship with Standard Life where regime change at the top meant that, while previously the relationship had been about big parties for customers, opinion formers and politicians, it now required 'some manoeuvring' to establish how philanthropy in Scotland would benefit the global company. He described how members of the EIF Board had a role in developing ideas with the company about corporate citizenship and the responsibility to give back to the community where the company is based. His department had the task of introducing new ideas which could benefit the company and might result in a plausible new sponsorship agreement. Wynn explained that he had brought in Jackie Westbrook and the Marketing team to develop ideas with his own

department and that they had presented Standard Life with the idea of making short films which would give people special insights into the world of the EIF. The films would show a day in the life of Festival workers, for instance of the Head of Technical, John Robb, building sets, or of a driver bringing world famous artists to rehearsals and performances. The result was *Festival Insights* a series of videos presented on the EIF website as offering people an experience they wouldn't normally have, sponsored by Standard Life. Wynn confirmed that the videos, made with Napier University, had proved very popular but that it was an example of a far from straightforward initiative requiring creativity and 'some degree of guile, and manipulation'.

Despite the urgent need to attract new sponsors the EIF faces some limitations. Wynn noted in the interview on 15 January 2010 that many major institutions have programming all year round and artists can be brought into regular monthly or weekly introductions, but that because the EIF has only three weeks, 'it's more of a hard sell, we don't produce, apart from a few things, we mostly present. There are particular and limited things we can offer.' He described how the strategy which the department devised to make maximum use of those three weeks was a programme of 'Cultivation Events' for potential sponsors, cultural attache's and delegations from foreign Governments. The aim of these events, which are built around visits to the shows, is to benefit the EIF directly and they have been a feature of its sponsorship operation for some time. However, the wider potential benefits of presenting in this way have recently been recognised and representatives from CEC and the Scottish Government, including the Leader of the Council, The Provost and the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs have hosted events. This new advocacy role is further discussed in Chapter Seven.

On 23 September 2010, Baker reported detecting some positive responses from potential sponsors at events in the 2010 Festival and suggested that this might be because of the wider role the EIF is now recognised as being able to play and the fact that it has been successful in demonstrating its centrality to the economy and to the success of Edinburgh and Scotland. She thought that businesses who understand that the public sector is being squeezed may, perhaps, recognise the

need for them to step in. However, she noted that there are aspects of the way that these events have developed, which includes the management of major visits to Edinburgh by diplomats and trade delegations, which present problems for the EIF: 'We are a magnet ... people want to see us, and everyone should be able to benefit from these contacts systematically - but we haven't cracked how to do it consistently unless we do it, but there is a cost and capacity issue to this.'

These pressures caused changes in the operational priorities of the EIF and how it gears the sponsorship budgets. Baker acknowledged that, in order to try to arrest the downward trend in corporate giving, the EIF needed to broaden its sponsorship base and nurture sponsors who may give less and want different things. To do this, the Sponsorship department has to service more complex and more numerous fundraising partnerships. She identified that the sponsorship department therefore needed more resource than it had received in the past:

In general there has been a high return for small investment and now we need to invest more. It requires more people. The relation of expenses to cost has changed: at the moment it costs around £300,000 a year to bring in £2 million. Marketing costs £1 million (with print costs etc) and brings in the same amount. The era of sponsorship being a tiny percent of budget has gone, and that is hard when we are cutting budgets. We have to spend more just to stand still, not even to increase. (Interview with Joanna Baker, 23 September 2010)

In terms of sponsorship partnerships, the main finding was that Wynn's general direction of travel in establishing new projects to promote corporate and individual giving has proved prescient given the economic downturn which has caused changes in sponsoring patterns and reduced budgets from stakeholders. In terms of developing new individual giving, while he acknowledged that IN was losing money in 2011, it was considered a success because at its second year launch 75 members signed up - the same number as had joined during the whole year in 2010. Wynn sees it as developing new donor bases and systems as well as audiences - with the 'greying of the baby boomers' the aim is to develop larger scale patrons in their 40s and 50s.

The priority given to individual giving is also supported by the Conservative led UK Coalition Government's '*Giving*' White Paper published in May 2011 which urged arts organisations to adopt these same US pioneered approaches to sponsorship which Wynn considers will become standard in the UK. The paper aims to encourage philanthropy and announced a £10million Social Action fund to support ideas for growing giving in priority areas in England, and other funds to connect wealthy people with charities and to work with NESTA to encourage giving. Wynn confirmed on 22 June 2010 that the team is thinking about new mechanisms, 'there are stronger individual giving trends where we don't know where they are going - giving on Facebook, online, twitter etc - we don't know how that will affect what we do - we need to figure out how to make it work - for instance thinking about the fireworks which many people don't pay for'.

The Cultivation Events, and the wider advocacy role which has grown from this strategy to develop partnerships, now benefits the city of Edinburgh and Scotland generally but makes new demands on the EIF.

6.4 Partnering competitors: 'watch this space'³¹

The EIF is unusual in facing competition for artists and audiences not only from a growing number of other international festivals globally but also from a group of international festivals based in Edinburgh and, in some cases, taking place at the same time. In this competitive marketplace the EIF has taken the lead in developing partnerships with its local competitors. The situation was not initially promising, as Brian McMaster bluntly noted when interviewed in *The Scotsman* about the development of the *Edinburgh Festivals Strategy* (GDA 2000): 'When I started (in 1992) there was no co-operation at all. The atmosphere was appalling. Now we get together regularly to discuss common issues, but there is still no clear vision of where we should all be going' (Bell 2000). The strategy report corroborated this view, quoting one member of the group of Festival Directors as saying 'every now and again the effort of working together alongside the inevitable clashes of individual interests becomes too great and the group implodes' (GDA

³¹ Phrase from an Interview with Joanna Baker, Managing Director EIF, 23.September, 2010.

2001:77). The report was not very positive about the potential for collaboration, describing the festivals as ‘a group of linked cottage industries [. . .] as some are in competition with each other for audiences, there is a limit to what Council involvement can achieve in terms of improving information resources’ (GDA 2001:58). However, from 1992, the EIF took a lead in bringing the festivals together, as the Joint Festivals Working Group (JFWG), to share understanding and ambitions and undertake joint mutually beneficial research projects around marketing. When the cultural partnership was proposed by CEC in 1999 this group supported it and argued for the series of influential research commissions which provide a narrative of Edinburgh’s cultural policy development in relation to the festivals.

By 2006 *Thundering Hooves* had published an Action Plan which recommended the formal establishment of a new organisation which would be a strategic body representing the international festivals with one voice externally and promoting the Edinburgh festivals brand. This recommendation was strongly supported by the management of the EIF and the new body, Festivals Edinburgh, was established in 2007, with a Board composed of the Directors of the 12 major festivals. Initially it was funded by £30K of subscriptions from the festivals themselves and its role was to take the lead on their joint strategic development and to look at over-arching areas of mutual interest. Festivals Edinburgh was to be the strategic arm of the Festivals Forum, discussed in 6.2, and these two new organisations were a logical and radical outcome and embodiment of the partnership strategy. Baker was Chair of Festivals Edinburgh during the early years and managed the formation of working groups to deepen engagement and integrate strategic thinking by the Festival Directors. Designed to add value to the existing festivals, the operation was described by Faith Liddell, Chief Executive of Festivals Edinburgh, in interview on 14 July 2010, as, ‘Nature’s model, it’s about competition and co-operation in order to thrive - to thrive rather than survive. It was definitely created by the festivals, it is their organisation.’

This rather Darwinian description of a model where competitors co-operate is an example of the ‘co-opetition’ strategy theorised by Brandenburger and Nalebuff (1996) and discussed in Chapter Two. Theorists describe the popularity of these

forms of partnership, where rivals collaborate for particular strategic projects, as being in response to a range of conditions, including scarcity of funds or a competitive market place (Hooley et al 2004:175) and both are characteristics of the situation in Edinburgh. Hooley et al also suggest that such alliances can go beyond co-operation and lead to new organisational forms. Mission Models Money (MMM), an agency promoting a more business oriented approach to the management of cultural organisations, recently produced a guide to collaborative working, *Fuelling the necessary revolution*, which featured a case study of the Edinburgh festivals. It described the strategy of producing new forms as reflecting a maturity of purpose by the partners indicating a recognition that their long-term needs as a group can be better managed by a new organisation.

Theorists also note that organisations formed in response to the needs of its partner members will have particular characteristics: for instance they are likely to be characterised by flexibility with an emphasis on relationships rather than market transactions (Lambert et al 1996). The management skills needed for such a potentially volatile group are referenced by Achrol (1997) and Morgan and Hunt (1994) and include: the ability to manage power relations; the ability to deal with the conflicting demands of commitment and interdependence of the members and the ability to instigate trust. Liddell's evidence indicates that her management style is more intuitive than theoretical, and has been honed by previous experience in the arts world rather than that of business and she acknowledges that the task of promoting a number of different partners and giving them one voice is a complex one.

I got knowledge out of frustration and failure in the past to achieve what we are doing here. There has been no theory, I just made it all up. OK there is a theoretical framework. I get invited to talk about Leadership and influence and power etc. but we have invented our own theory and our own words, our own methodology because it hasn't been done. I don't have time to read theory on psychology of collaboration and it would disrupt. Defining it as a group is our methodology, collectively tweaking and adapting to make it work. It is an act of engineering. (Interview with Faith Liddell, 14 July 2010)

One of the potential pitfalls of working collaboratively with twelve international festivals was highlighted by Mills in criticisms about lack of articulacy on the part of the press in distinguishing between the festivals in August (Woolman 2010:5). Mills complained about the tendency for the press to report as if they were one big festival, saying that this conflation is an irritant and a product of media laziness (ibid). However Liddell, in the interview cited above, acknowledged that in many ways her organisation must use this strategy, capitalising on the frequent visitor perception that there is one big festival in the summer. While she was clear that boundaries are needed and that Festivals Edinburgh must add value rather than poach territory, resources or strategies belonging to any of the individual festivals, she admitted, 'We are using the idea that people see it as one festival and promoting that as a brand for navigation in the city [. . .] but there are issues around festivals wanting to assert their own festival in the city. We have to say we can't do everything.'

Other benefits of Festivals Edinburgh not aired by the theorists were referred to by Donald Smith, Director of the Scottish Storytelling Centre and Festival, and Chair of Festival Edinburgh's Programming Committee in 2011. In an interview on 9 December 2011 he noted that Festivals Edinburgh has an important role to play in enabling discussion and debate about the artistic content of the festivals and the development of programming ideas. His view was that it provides a forum in which discussions which were formerly 'suppressed' could now be engaged with. He cited the example of a new Director of the Tattoo who had come in with the assumption that the meetings were to discuss creative thoughts and perceptions and had been 'a breath of fresh air' and welcomed this opportunity to talk more freely about content. These comments indicated that there were areas of discussion still not entirely comfortably occupied by the Festival Directors jointly. Smith also referred to the staff training element as a benefit for a smaller festival, like his, which had gained expertise and knowledge through being part of Festivals Edinburgh as well as accessing new funding sources and benefiting from the lobbying and advocacy role it plays.

Since the Festivals Edinburgh model appears to work well, there is interest in whether it has the potential to be exportable to other sectors. In Scotland the

tourism agencies, VisitScotland and EventScotland which are vital to the festivals' interests, have joined Festivals Edinburgh's partnership portfolio:

we are now pushing for developments in the tourism sector because if that doesn't get sorted out we suffer ourselves. I am involved in leading some workshops and proposing theories of good practice - using our collaborative working in Festivals Edinburgh as a model. I am chairing a group trying to set up collaborative working across tourism in Edinburgh. (Interview with Faith Liddell, 14 July 2010).

Baker noted on 1 November 2010 that a video about the establishment and operation of Festivals Edinburgh is also being used by Scottish Enterprise as an example of a successful outcome of this kind of collaboration. Festivals Edinburgh also organised a Master class on *Policies for Festivals* as part of the *Creative Clusters 2008* international conference on the creative economy.³² The Director of Festivals Edinburgh, the Head of Culture and Sport at CEC and the Director of the Culture Division of the Scottish Government jointly gave a presentation to an international audience on how to develop a distinctive offer that achieves the wider development goals of a city through cultural partnership using the Festivals Strategy as an example.³³ However, Faith Liddell's experience has been that other international arts festivals, while impressed by the idea of collaboration, are often not ready to stop competing with each other and she noted in interview on 14 July 2010 that, 'you need to be ready - innovation ready and collaboration ready'.

As well as providing a potential model of good practice for other agencies, a further test of success for the organisation is being able to establish a high media profile. In Scotland, Festivals Edinburgh has achieved this by getting articles into business sections of newspapers for example a discussion of major new marketing strategies to promote the festivals in the US and Canada by meeting with tour operators and the travel trade (Blackley 2009). Mills' campaign to bring visitors to

³² Attended by the researcher. 29 November 2008.

³³ Sessions included: developing the relationship between festivals and partners; research, evaluation and impact; joined up marketing and the public sector's role in supporting festivals and embedding them into other areas of city strategy.

the 2012 Olympic Games and the 2014 Commonwealth Games to Edinburgh was also widely reported.

However, while the formation of Festivals Edinburgh has demonstrable advantages for the festivals and their stakeholders such as increasing budgets for joint marketing and achieving project funding for specialist research, it is vulnerable to a range of disadvantages and risks. These include the possibility that the alliance may not, and may not need to, work over time and issues around the excellence, equality and uniqueness of the festival partners (Hooley et al 1998:198). Quinn (1992) notes that the existence of the alliance will not in itself guarantee the strength of performance required of each individual member in order to maintain the quality of the group offering. The partnership depends on individual festivals maintaining clear identity and quality thresholds. Liddell acknowledged in the interview cited above that 'It could all fall down. All it would take is a bad appointment, or someone who was disruptive.' While the members of Festivals Edinburgh have an equal voice and are required to contribute equally, they are a disparate group of festivals in terms of size and longevity and it is not clear how the emergence of tensions due to inequalities in funding and capacity can be dealt with in the longer term. Baker, speaking on 23 September 2010, agrees that:

we can't all develop at the same speed. Decisions have to work for everyone. It's a common issue but a real one. Watch this space - its not a fixed place, its absolutely evolving.

Festivals Edinburgh is an example of an organisation which emerged from a set of fortuitous circumstances. Initially driven by the threat of competitors and the need to market effectively, the festival partners were able to develop policy and operate as a partnership on the basis of trust. Crucially, in the years 2006-2009, public stakeholders in Scotland were able to deliver the funding required to make it work (£177,000 support from CEC enabled a £1 million turnover in 2010). However, the organisation is vulnerable to changing economic circumstances and stakeholder priorities. Both Liddell and Baker pointed out that existing support was all project funding. In early 2010 no future funding streams had been identified, partly because the organisation has no assets since the brands of the

individual partners are not saleable. It has a definable function when it is able to increase the capacity of the members through enhanced marketing strategies and advocacy work but is dependent on raising the funding for each project. However, in July 2010, Festivals Edinburgh received an award from Creative Scotland to set up an Innovation Lab in partnership with the University of Edinburgh's Department of Infomatics which is designed to develop the new areas of technology most likely to benefit artlovers. *The Scotsman* reported that festival audiences represent a sophisticated market of 'early adopters' of mobile and computer technologies who would act as the co-designers of the Infomatics future in the arts (Wade 2010a:). This function of looking ahead and researching future opportunities is an important new asset for the festivals which Festivals Edinburgh has enabled.

The EIF has played an important role in the development, support and strategic operation of Festivals Edinburgh. In 2010 Baker was working with the organisation to build strategy and acquire resources to ensure that the Edinburgh festivals would be included in the Cultural Olympiad Programme for 2012 and in the Cultural programme for the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014. This key project for the festivals illustrates the growing cultural policy role the EIF is playing in Scotland which is further discussed in Chapter Seven.

6.5 International partnerships

The EIF has played a significant role in developing successful partnership strategies with competitor festivals and in supporting Festivals Edinburgh. For the EIF itself, partnerships with international governments, and with international competitor festivals, have become increasingly important both artistically and financially. Baker confirmed that co-production partnerships were vital to the integrity and exclusivity of the programming, even when the EIF was under financial constraints:

The general principle is that the EIF should always be able to put money into co-productions - it is how we ensure we have exclusive work, important for our international status and branding, things have to open here first or be seen only here, but it is increasingly tough to make them happen and high risk. (Interview with Joanna Baker, 23 September 2010)

Mills brought his own international perspective to the Festival, saying in an interview on 3 February 2010 ‘it is an infinitely more complex world, with no centre of gravity in the way Europe has thought of itself in the last 250 years’. He also believes that artistically and financially, co-production partnerships are essential to contribute toward making shows to articulate the exploration of his festival themes. Mills has pioneered a pro-active approach to bringing work he wants to the Festival. When he has identified a company he wants to work with he arranges to meet Culture Ministers and, if possible, Heads of Government, of the country to discuss what potential funding arrangements could be made to bring the work to Edinburgh. The 2010 EIF programme featured co-productions with Mexico, New Zealand, Chile and Spain as part of the festival theme exploring post colonial cultural influences and ideas. These were new funding partnerships bringing work from companies not seen in Edinburgh before. A large delegation from China also visited Edinburgh in 2010 in preparation for the focus on Asia planned for EIF 2011 and also co-inciding with CEC’s strategy to develop new business links with China. *The Scotsman* reported that the EIF had raised £300,000 from overseas governments in 2010 (Ferguson 2010b) and, with the threat of public funding cuts and shrinking sponsorship opportunities in 2011, it appeared important to continue this strategy.

Baker explained that the general model for financial deals is that the EIF pays a fee for the company to come to Edinburgh, which is as close as possible to marginal costs, but is not a contribution to core costs. An ideal arrangement is where a foreign government finances at least part of the costs of bringing the show. An example of this kind of financing arrangement was the 2009 partnership with the Romanian Government to bring Silviu Purcarete’s production of *Faust* with the Romanian National Theatre ‘Radu Stanca’ Sibiu. The project was a high profile one which illustrated some of the potential successes and difficulties posed by international partnerships of this kind. Baker and John Robb, the Technical Director, described the *Faust* as a spectacular show with a huge cast which required an enormous venue and which could not have been funded or staged by the EIF from its core funds or in its established theatres.



Figure 9. (The List, Festival Guide. August 2009)

Baker explained that, after meetings between Mills and representatives of the Romanian Government, it was agreed that the Romanians would make a significant contribution to the costs of bringing the show to Edinburgh while the EIF covered the costs of hiring and equipping the venue. While the partnership was an exciting one, interviews indicated that it put considerable strain on the staff in all departments of the EIF and that it was an extremely risky venture. On 7 June 2009 Baker described how it had emerged that the Romanian company and their government operated on different time scales from the EIF and had different expectations of what preparations would be required to deliver the show in Edinburgh. She confirmed that, for the management of the EIF, it is an imperative

that funding is confirmed and delivered well before the show goes on and that, in this case, the funding was critical to being able to put the show on at all. However, while funding had been promised at the highest level, it was subject to political uncertainties in Romania which meant that the financial negotiations were still not complete, at the time of this interview in June 2009, for the opening in August 2009.

The technical requirements of the partnership were also considerable and John Robb described, in interview on 19 January 2010, the enormous amount of detail associated with bringing such a large and complex show from another country to a venue new to the EIF. He also identified a specific difficulty hard to predict or avoid. This was the Romanian administrator through whom all arrangements had to be made 'We were putting things through and he would make up answers . . . if it all has to go through one person it is tricky with a foreign language. He assumed a role of superiority . . . made decisions he shouldn't have made.' Baker confirmed that many of the problems identified were inherent to international partnerships and a familiar aspect of bringing shows to Edinburgh. In the case of *Faust* the problems were exacerbated by the time scale and the lack of certainty about the finances until the very last minute. The project illustrated the precarious and difficult experience of promoting a show without the core funding to cover the costs.

In the event the partnership paid off critically and politically. All the shows sold out and an article in *The Sunday Herald* placed the staging and success of *Faust* as a measure of the EIF Festival Director's imagination and ambition and noted the political significance of the Scottish Minister responsible for Culture, Mike Russell, and the Provost of Edinburgh attending a performance (Macwhirter 2009). While the technical teams enjoyed finding solutions to the problems it is not clear how the additional work and stress for all staff can be calculated in terms of the costs versus the eventual benefits. Despite the positive outcomes of the *Faust* partnership, having to rely on such international collaborations as a strategy to augment programme funding makes the EIF vulnerable artistically, financially and in terms of staff resources. While it can result in innovative and intellectually stimulating programming, the range of work which can be brought in this way is

limited to existing work the Festival Director wants, his ability to offer co-production finance to create new work, and foreign governments being able to fund the work the EIF wants to bring to Edinburgh. There is inevitably a risk of distorting programme making due to the limited options available and the willingness of foreign governments to fund.

As well as co-production and direct funding partnerships with foreign governments, the EIF has also pursued a strategy of partnership with competitor international festivals, as suggested in *Thundering Hooves* (2006). In 2006 Mills signed a formal strategic alliance with the Singapore International Festival establishing an artistic exchange in which a Theatre Cryptic project, developed in Scotland, went to the Singapore Festival and a big showcase of work from Singapore was funded by the Singapore Government to come to Edinburgh in 2007. In 2009 a partnership agreement with Mexico, a newer festival, meant that the Mexican Government funded the opera Montezuma at EIF 2010 and the EIF hosted a member of the Mexican festival team. The British Ambassador to Mexico came to the opening of Montezuma and Baker, the EIF Managing Director, indicated, on 23 September 2011, that, in this partnership, the EIF was more of a mentor to the younger festival: 'The Mexican Government saw us as generous, lending expertise and example as well as providing a platform.' From the EIF's point of view it was artistically important to bring over the work and it was also a political success as the high-level delegation which the Festival attracted from Mexico was useful to the Scottish Government in its trade relationships with that country.

Collaborations and international co-productions are identified as essential for the EIF to maintain international excellence (EIF Business Plan 2009-2012:5). The Business Plan commits the EIF to delivering a 'Core Festival' which includes full programming in the six key Festival venues; a biennial commissioned visual arts programme; audience development through innovative programme initiatives such as ground breaking use of technology; community engagement and professional development programme; international marketing and brand development and ensuring a Reserves fund to ensure business continuity (EIF Business Plan 2009-2012:3). The first Strategic Priority of the plan is to continue to create EIF productions and collaborations, with outcomes identified as extended range and

reputation and developing audiences. However the enhancement of programme budgets from these collaborations, which the research has identified as a significant aspect of these partnerships, is not listed as an outcome. Such partnerships enable the EIF to deliver its Core Festival by reducing programme costs but the costs to the EIF of acquiring these extra funding streams in terms of the increasing pressure on existing staff expertise and resources are hidden.

Equally, while Mills has brought a new international perspective and created challenging programming reflecting his intellectual interests and a pragmatic acceptance that he is financially constrained towards curating rather than commissioning, it is not clear whether this way of programming can maintain the EIF at the forefront of international festivals indefinitely. The success of *Faust* confirms that the ability to attract a major high profile international show is crucial to the perception of the EIF as a leader in the field. However, competition is emerging from The Manchester International Festival (MIF) which is predicated on commissioning new work and is funded to do so. Research by the EIF press office indicated that MIF gained more press coverage than the EIF in 2009, making the Festival vulnerable since neither the press nor audiences necessarily recognize the policy distinctions between MIF and EIF. These distinctions could of course change.

6.6. Reflections on Findings

Partnership has been central to the development of cultural policy in Edinburgh since the strategy was adopted by CEC in 1999. In this CEC were following a general local authority trend in response to reductions in cultural budgets. However, in Edinburgh, the concept of cultural partnership was followed by action because of the existence of the unusually large number of international festivals supported by CEC. The Council brought the festivals and their stakeholders together and commissioned the *Edinburgh Festivals Strategy* in 2002 which established the economic importance of the festivals to the city, and to Scotland, and described how they could be exploited to brand the city.

Through the cultural partnership the missions of the festivals and the agendas of the public funders became more closely aligned because of the growing pressures to provide accountability, transparency about objectives, persuasive narratives to unlock funding and evidence of value for public investment. Key research commissioned by the partnership documents the development of a strategy which has had significant outcomes for the festivals themselves, their stakeholders and for Edinburgh as a city.³⁴ Crucial to the success of the city's cultural partnership strategy for festivals was the active support of the EIF and its ability to influence the other international festivals. Also important were the political changes which meant that a Scottish Government was on the doorstep, both more easily accessible and more able to intervene and that civil servants and politicians were present 'on the ground' so that relationships could be developed in more direct ways than when cultural policy was largely formulated in London.

A further factor in the strategic development of cultural partnerships in Edinburgh is that key figures at CEC (Lynne Halfpenny), at SAC/Creative Scotland, (Anita Clark), and at EIF, (Joanna Baker), have been in post for an extended period and Faith Liddell has been a leading arts manager during this period which has enabled the development of trust in a way which might not have happened otherwise. The evidence examined in this chapter suggests that the development of a cultural partnership policy by CEC in Edinburgh brought real benefits for the EIF and other festivals but that the focus is on more professionalized organisational processes and augmented marketing to *promote* programming rather than on developing resources to support programming *per se*.

Mills has revitalised and renewed the EIF's strategy of initiating new international partnerships to co-produce and to encourage international governments to fund

³⁴ 1999: Towards the New Enlightenment: a Cultural Policy for the City of Edinburgh, CEC;
2001: Festivals and the City: The Edinburgh Festivals Strategy, Graham Devlin Associates;
2004: Economic Impact Report on the Edinburgh Festivals, SQW;
2006: Thundering Hooves, AEA Consulting;
2007: CEC Study of Cultural venues in the city, Pmp;
2011: Edinburgh Festivals: Impact Study, BOP Consulting.

performances by their companies in Edinburgh. These partnerships are increasingly important to create high quality work and risk more experimental performances but also to reduce programme costs. While they offer audiences a more diverse range of experiences, the additional technical, cultural, economic and political resources needed to deliver these partnerships make heavy demands on staff. Also, a reliance on funding from foreign governments cannot replace core funding without making the EIF vulnerable to accusations of distorted programming decisions based on financial rather than artistic criteria. In addition, the strategy of relying on international partnerships appears to be primarily a pragmatic one and would have its limits should the level of core funding reduce further.

Baker explained on 11 February 2009 that the management of partnerships in Edinburgh is also particularly important now to maintain the mix of public and private funding which, historically, has been essential to fund the EIF's core festival. She noted that partnerships with CEC, Creative Scotland and the Scottish Government are about 'engaging in order to protect and support the core' and making sure that the partners 'understand what the festival is, what it can deliver and what is needed to support it: it is about putting the programme on the stage'. However, CEC is funding a group of major international festivals on a regional budget. *Edinburgh Festivals Strategy* (2001) had confirmed that Chicago, Salzburg, Avignon and Bourges were better funded than the EIF and provided useful figures indicating what additional funding would be needed for the EIF to 'compete on a level playing field' (GDA 2001:iv).³⁵ In 2009 the effects of the economic downturn appeared to put an end to aspirational plans to expand and develop along the lines recommended in the pmp (2007) report on venue infrastructure which had been commissioned by CEC. While the Scottish Government has argued, in McConnell's St Andrews Day Speech (2003) and *Scotland's Culture* (2006), that a policy of cultural partnership should be extended more broadly to other policy and spending

³⁵ 'To attain the mean investment (as a proportion of turnover) of other British festivals, CEC would need to invest an additional c£300k; To match the European averages, the national and local funding bodies would need to invest an additional £520k; To restore the festivals' funding to their 1995/96 levels (the last year before unitary authority status), the funders would need to find an additional £340k, in addition to the additional £100k awarded to EIF for 2001/02.' (GDA 2001:iv)

departments such as Education, Tourism or Enterprise, these arguments appear to have made little headway.

As well as a changing partnership with public stakeholders, and an increasing reliance on partnerships with international governments, the EIF also experienced a change in the relationship which it had to cultivate with sponsors. From a relationship of patronage the Festival was moving to a more reciprocal relationship of partnership with sponsors which also created new demands. The evidence indicates that the EIF adopted new strategies to attract and service current and potential sponsors as well as international governments. This diversification of fund raising roles has led the EIF to share its thinking and to use its expertise on behalf of CEC and the Scottish Government thus developing a new advocacy role for itself which is explored in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN - CHANGING GOVERNMENT AGENDAS

Introduction

This chapter sets out to consider how the role of the EIF is changing in response to new political agendas in the twenty-first century. It examines how the pressures and expectations currently bearing upon the EIF partly reflect broad changes in the political environment which have been the driving force underlying the phenomenon of festivalisation. Since the start of the current century governments everywhere have been increasingly aware of the potential for festivals and other creative organisations to promote economic growth and to assist in objectives related to cultural engagement and inclusion. These political cross-currents have naturally re-shaped the broad operating environment for the EIF but, in addition, the EIF's experience of responding to political agendas reflects forces and opportunities arising from the very particular circumstances for this investigation - post-devolution Scotland in the period 2009-2011. The chapter, therefore, examines how the political context for the EIF has been re-shaped both by local circumstances within Scotland and, more broadly, by the influence of creative industries theory on cultural policy which has affected the cultural sector more widely.

A shift in the wider policy environment was signalled in the UK when, in 1998, the Labour government published *A New Cultural Framework* (DCMS 1998), a paper which laid out its cultural strategy and expounded the following rationale for funding the arts:

To ensure excellence; to protect *innovation*; to assist *access* for as many people as possible, both to create and to appreciate; to help provide the seedbed for the creative *economy*; and to assist in the *regeneration* of areas of deprivation. (DCMS 1998:19)

This formulation was indicative of a change to a more instrumental approach to arts funding and it acknowledged that the UK government now expected cultural organisations to perform a multiplicity of roles in support of differing government

agendas. The idea that investment in the arts is about generating economic returns was reinforced in other key policy documents published around that time including *The Creative Industries Mapping Document* (DCMS 1998) and *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* (Myerscough 1998).

In the local Scottish context, a separate and additional force driving change in relationships between government and arts organisations was the establishment, through the Scotland Act 1998, of the Scottish Parliament. Cultural policy in Scotland had traditionally been influenced by UK cultural planning but, with devolution, a process of re-evaluation of Scottish priorities in Scotland began. With political debate on Scottish affairs now taking place in the Scottish Parliament and with cultural policy a devolved area, the potential for a distinctively Scottish cultural policy to emerge brought opportunity for arts organisations to operate in a more political arena (McCrone et al 1995). Therefore, the range of instrumental arguments for supporting culture which characterise UK policy more generally are accompanied, in the Scottish environment, by pressures related to a heightened interest in defining the identity and distinctiveness of Scotland within the UK and in a wider international context. High profile arts organisations such as the EIF have become increasingly aware of the opportunity to play an ambassadorial role on behalf of Scotland and to be an instrument of international diplomacy on behalf of the emerging Scottish polity.

Both strands of thought have been evident in key landmark statements defining the direction for Scottish cultural policy in recent years. For example, the 2003 St Andrew's Day Speech by Scottish First Minister, Jack McConnell, expressed a vision of culture as an instrument of governance 'with the potential to bolster the economy and improve the national image' (Elliot 2007:8). More recently, the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs in Scotland articulated a similar vision in a speech at the opening of the 2010 Celtic Connections music festival:

Scotland trades on the international recognition of its culture and heritage.

It is a major attraction for visitors and showcases our country as a diverse

and exciting place to live and work; so increased confidence and creativity can only be good for business. (Fiona Hyslop, 14 January 2010)³⁶

The climate of economic austerity which has followed in the wake of the 2008-09 financial crisis has resulted in major cuts to budgets for arts organisations in the UK but it has not alleviated high expectations on the part of government in relation to the role festivals and other arts organisations should play in sustaining participation and promoting other socio-cultural and economic goals. The situation remains that 'politicians naturally want art to be a tool of politics. There is no such thing as neutral giving' (Appleyard 2010:15). The burgeoning range of political outcomes that festivals in the twenty-first century are expected to deliver - participation and social cohesiveness; education; tourism and employment; economic regeneration; artistic excellence; cultural diplomacy et al - can be seen as placing excessive strain on the resources and managerial capacity of institutions whose operations have traditionally been exclusively focused on culture. However, as discussed below, the experience of the EIF suggests that festivals can be adept in servicing a multiplicity of agendas and a willingness to take the initiative in forging more effective relationships with government can be used, at least to some extent, as a source of opportunity and advantage.

7.1 Economic agendas

The political context for the festivals in Edinburgh from 2007 - 2012 reflects the fact that, for the SNP government which is currently in power, economic growth is the top priority. The word 'culture', with reference to the arts, makes no appearance in their 2007 National Performance Framework. Nor does it occur in the Scottish Government's five strategic objectives.³⁷ It is mentioned only once under the fifteen national outcomes, as a sub-clause of National Identity: 'Using culture in the promotion of Scotland - making Scotland a great place to live, work or visit and helping to manage our reputation as an independent minded and responsible nation' (<http://home.Scotland.gov.uk>, 29 September 2011). In 2011,

³⁶ Fiona Hyslop. Opening of Celtic Connections on 14 January 2010.
www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Reslease/2010/01/19103244

³⁷ These are: Wealthier and Fairer, Healthier, Safer and Stronger, Smarter, Greener.

the only reference to the festivals in the SNP's National Performance Framework is an economic one - under the National Outcome 'We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe' - as a sub-outcome, 'Edinburgh's Festivals have a global competitive edge'. While it is an achievement to see the festivals mentioned at all in this policy statement, the suggested measures for this outcome - total attendances, income and number of jobs - illustrates the wholly instrumental approach which has been criticised in earlier work on the shortcomings of economic impact studies (Bragge and Snowball 2005; Seaman 2011; Towse 2011) referred to in Chapter Two.

At the beginning of 2010 the EIF and other arts organisations feared that the Coalition driven cuts to the public sector in the UK would adversely affect cultural organisations in Scotland and, at the same time, they were also vulnerable to the specific political circumstances of imminent Scottish elections in May 2011.

In times of economic crisis there is a genuine schizophrenia amongst policy-makers between the desire to see cultural institutions generate as much income as possible to make them less reliant on their public funding and the desire to see them accessible to a wider range of people through beneficial pricing initiatives, etc. (Interview with Joanna Baker, 14 July 2010)

However, early in 2011, Fiona Hyslop, Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, signalled a significant divergence between Scotland and Westminster, announcing that:

the valuable contribution that culture makes to our society and our economy is recognised across the Scottish Government which is why - in the face of unprecedented cuts imposed by the Westminster Government - we are continuing to invest in the sector. (Scottish Government 2011:1)

However, this speech was made on the eve of the Scottish elections and arts organisations were not able to rely on it as a guide to future policy for the next five years until, in May 2011, the SNP won a clear victory. At this time the

economic downturn and the virtual collapse of the Scottish banks had created a very different financial situation from that envisaged at the time the EIF Business Plan 2009-2012 was written and concerns about future funding led the stakeholders of the Edinburgh festivals to commission an update of the earlier economic impact study conducted by SQW in 2004 in order to maintain awareness of the economic benefits created by the festivals within both local and national government.

The *Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study* (BOP Consulting) published in May 2011 offered renewed evidence of the value that festivals generate across a broad spectrum of outcomes but especially in economic terms. The study calculated that Edinburgh's Festivals generate £261 million annually for the national economy and that the festivals sustain 5,242 full-time equivalent jobs. The report made the point that, with over 4 million attendances, 'the lion's share of additional, non-ticket visitor expenditure is attributable to beneficiary businesses, such as hotels and retailers. 37% (or £41m) goes to accommodation providers, 34% to food and drink establishments, 6% to retailers and 9% is spent on transport' (Festivals Edinburgh Press Release 2011:3). These findings were compared with recent estimates of the value to the Scottish economy generated by golf tourism which was calculated as being £191 million - a lower figure than the economic value generated by the festivals. The survey therefore successfully performed the function of confirming that investment in cultural festivals by the Culture and Sport department at CEC provides an economic stimulus which benefits local businesses in Edinburgh and brings tourism to Scotland.

The Scottish Government, in its earlier enunciations of the need to harness creativity and culture as a means to support growth of the wider economy, had indicated awareness that opportunities to exploit culture for the purposes of promoting business go beyond the arena of tourism. In 2006, *Scotland's Culture* had suggested that a policy structure be set up in Scotland which reflected the importance of culture to the wider economy:

All portfolios of Government recognise that they have a role to play in *the supply of culture* to advance their *business objectives*, and all will take culture into account in their future planning activity, in light of the

cultural review [. . .] there have been regular meetings between the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport with other Cabinet Ministers to achieve this objective. These discussions have produced a programme of joint actions. (Scottish Executive 2006)

This rhetoric is in keeping with the general spirit of creative economy policies championed by politicians at UK level. However there has been little evidence of practical follow-through in the shape of greater collaboration between relevant business-oriented departments of the Scottish Government or the City of Edinburgh Council and the festivals. In 2010, an article in *The Scotsman* ‘Creative capital second only to London’ noted that new research from FDi Intelligence stated that ‘As a city renowned for the performing arts, it is unsurprising that Edinburgh should excel in the creative industries’ but that, in spite of key figures which indicate strength in the sector (28,000 people employed within the creative industries sectors or seven per cent of the total workforce in the city) ‘the entire creative industries sector in the capital lacked a major profile and was in need of a support infrastructure for businesses’ (Ferguson 2010a). This report implies that the festivals are not seen as part of the creative industries sector.

Baker confirmed, in discussions on 11 February and 11 October 2011 that a reduction in public funding to the EIF, which amounted to £800,000 over three years, due to the impact of recession meant that the EIF’s Business Plan had to be reviewed. Whereas such cuts are naturally seen as unwelcome, especially since they fly in the face of the evidence of how festivals contribute economic value to the city of Edinburgh and to the wider Scottish economy, Baker was at the same time cautious when asked whether she thought any transfer in funding and oversight of the EIF from culture departments to potentially better-funded enterprise or economic development departments would be more advantageous or appropriate, given the benefits it generates. For Baker, the concern is that such a shift could inhibit artistic innovation and risk-taking, the need for which is better understood by culture departments.

Despite frequent recourse to rhetoric about the economic justification for public investment in festivals, it appears that neither the relevant government

administrations nor the EIF is convinced that closer involvement on the part of enterprise and industry budget holders in partnership or collaboration with arts organisations is necessary or desirable. But, as is evident from concerns expressed by Mills on 3 February 2010, the ongoing funding of festivals from arts and cultural budgets that are severely limited does not sit comfortably with heightened demands to contribute towards economic growth. For Mills, neglect of the festival in favour of other local government funding priorities is a major concern if, in the future:

Local government can't afford to give the meagre amounts - meagre for the investment we make to the city - that it currently does, and nor can it afford proper maintenance and renovation in a timely fashion of existing venues. (Interview with Jonathan Mills, 3 February 2010)

7.2 Social Agendas

In addition to supporting economic agendas, festivals are also increasingly expected to contribute to social objectives including the development of a sense of confidence on the part of inhabitants in a city, increasing participation within arts and culture, offering greater access to and diversity within cultural provision, encouraging greater social cohesion, plus a range of educational and learning outcomes (BOP Consulting, 2011). A sense of the range of social objectives the EIF is now expected to work towards can be gained from its *End of Festival Report 2009*, prepared by the EIF for CEC. The targets the festival now reports on to CEC include: Audience Development; Training for Cultural Organisations; Marketing for Cultural Organisations including the development of new partnerships; Social Inclusion; Lifelong Learning and performance in relation to the *Connecting to Culture* Programme for schools and communities.

The extent to which the EIF has had to adjust its operations to take on board this multiplication of functions related to support of social objectives is illustrated by the growth of its Programme Development Department. This began in 1994 with a single part-time and temporary freelance post to deliver access agendas. The Department now employs two full-time staff running a year- round programme for

school children and communities in Edinburgh. Sally Hobson, Head of Programme Development, interviewed on 15 January 2010, acknowledged that activities in this area have expanded recently as Mills has embraced a burgeoning of responsibilities: 'Jonathan has put more pressure on us to grow it rather than 'contain' which Brian wanted. Work has grown faster than the administration base'.

For Hobson, the mission of the department reflects that of the EIF itself, to develop 'the flowering of the human spirit'. Through providing access to artists, the programme aims to 'give people a sense of that potential in themselves'. She suggested that the programme differs from other education and outreach programmes in that it is integrated into the Festival rather than being 'bolted on' and treats the children and communities it works with as festival goers with 'artists providing the engine'. She described how, originally, CEC worked closely with the department, but that targets are now set from within the EIF as part of its core activity. The department strives to 'make the Festival principles evolve into the real world - the education process is about engagement and who the child in front of you really is' and it promotes a range of different projects for different ages involving thousands of children each year. An example is a long-running project, *The Art of Listening*, which focuses on classical music and works by taking teachers and children out of the class room and encourages them to develop their listening and concentration skills in sessions using international standard performers chosen by the department. Hobson stressed the importance of the programme being devised and delivered outwith the constraints of the school curriculum. As part of the effort to encourage wider engagement and participation, the department collaborates with local media in projects to encourage older school children to develop their critical skills by analysing performances and writing reviews of EIF shows. It also runs outreach projects with groups from particular communities in Edinburgh. For example, in 2009 the Programme Development team worked with the Polish centre and with the Chinese centre and also ran a programme for groups of adults with learning disabilities.

Another aspect of the department's activity involves arranging series of talks which feature artists discussing their work and theoretical and philosophical explorations of programme themes, working in partnerships with other organisations which have

included the British Council in 2010 and the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 2009. The department is supported from trusts and foundations and partnerships with schools, academic institutions and local community groups.

In establishing the Programme Development Department, the EIF has responded to the agendas of stakeholders, particularly CEC, and has developed its own philosophy and strategy to deliver education and outreach. The *Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study* (BOP Consulting, 2011:32) conducted detailed research on the learning impacts of three of the festivals³⁸ and concluded that ‘the brevity of the interaction is likely to be a key reason why the Festivals’ impacts on increasing knowledge and learning, albeit positive, are perhaps not as high as expected (compared to other cultural sector research)’. In this respect the EIF programme has more resonance since it has a presence throughout the year, an important antidote to the argument that its impact is limited to three weeks in August. However, Baker is clear that the social role which the festival plays should not be seen as separate from the work presented on stage in the festival:

Policy-makers have to recognize that the education and outreach programme comes very directly from our existence as a cultural institution - from our core mission which is our artistic programme. (Interview at *Open the Doors* event organized by EIF in July 2010).

7.3 Cultural Agendas

Whereas the expectation that festivals can play an important and measurable role in supporting social policy objectives such as inclusion, cohesiveness and confidence-building is a relatively recent phenomenon, it has long been recognised that festivals can and do wield considerable artistic and cultural influence. The ways in which festivals concentrate and shape consumption of art and provide a site for culture to be contested has ensured their ongoing prominence in

³⁸ Edinburgh International Science Festival, Edinburgh Art Festival and Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

contributing to cultural politics (Waterman, 1998). The interest that governments and political leaders have in supporting and forging relations with festivals is naturally shaped by awareness of such influence. However, Mills, interviewed on 3 February 2010, is critical of what he sees as an overall lack of vision from the Scottish Government in developing cultural policy and shaping the environment so as to enable the EIF to perform to its fullest potential. Indeed, Mills accords little credit to public policy in facilitating the general success of the EIF: 'In certain areas at certain times, cultural policy has been positively useless. It [the EIF] certainly flourished *in spite of* it.' He speaks of the Festival surviving through 'judicious neglect'.

The history of cultural policy in Scotland, and the part which the EIF has played in it, was explored earlier in Chapters Two and Three. One of the key landmarks was the establishment of a Culture Commission in 2004 to advise on how cultural policy should be re-organised in Scotland. The resulting report (Cultural Commission, Boyle 2005), which, after extensive consultation with the arts constituency, proposed amalgamating the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen into 'Creative Scotland', and thus fore-fronted debate about the creative industries and revealed confusion about how they were to be integrated and managed in a Scottish context. While the festivals are clearly a part of the creative economy as defined by the DCMS, they continued to be managed by the Culture and Sport department at CEC and by SAC, with its exclusively cultural remit, until Creative Scotland was finally established in 2010. Baker, on 11 February 2011, explained that, against this background of major political change and an extended period of transition for cultural organizations while Creative Scotland was being debated and legally established, the EIF concentrated on developing closer strategic relationships with the Scottish Government and with the civil servants in the Cultural Policy Department and the Festival's recognition of the importance of working in partnership with the Scottish Government on the management of the Expo Fund In terms of forging relationships to showcase Scottish culture and creativity internationally was discussed in Chapter Six.

The role of enhancing a new sense of national identity also continues to emerge as an increasingly important one for the EIF. Key findings from the *Edinburgh*

Festivals Impact Study (BOP Consulting, 2011:4) indicate that 85% of all respondents agree that 'the Festivals promote a confident, positive Scottish national identity; and 89% of Edinburgh respondents say that the Festivals increase local pride in their home city'. In addition, the report quoted '93% of visitors stating that the Festivals are part of what makes Edinburgh special as a city, 82% agreeing that the Festivals make them more likely to revisit Edinburgh in the future and 82% stating that the Festivals were their sole or an important reason for coming to Scotland'. The survey summarised these results by saying that the most striking aspect of the findings was 'the strong and positive impact that the Festivals have on the way the City of Edinburgh and Scotland are perceived, by locals and external visitors alike' and that 'the image that the Festivals present of Edinburgh and Scotland is one of diversity and openness; showcasing a positive national identity' (BOP *ibid*:4).

Festivals such as the Scottish International Storytelling Festival, with its overt focus on Scottish identity, culture and tradition are well placed to benefit from the renewed interest in Scottishness and feel that, for them, this is 'a theme whose time has come', as suggested by its Director, Donald Smith, interviewed on 9 December 2011. However, the EIF is able to contribute to Scotland's creative profile by fostering an association of confident leadership in arts, international culture and festivity which enhances Edinburgh's attractiveness as a city to visitors and to residents. As discussed in Chapter Two, the historical role that festivals have played in asserting identity has, in the Edinburgh festivals, become an assertion of national and international cultural achievement and ambition.

The *Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study* (*ibid*) also offered evidence that the festivals achieve a wider personal cultural impact. 77% of audiences responded positively when asked whether the festivals had broadened their experiences and introduced them to new elements of cultural forms and 76% of attending journalists agreed that the festivals encouraged risk-taking in audiences' cultural consumption. In terms of positive cultural experiences, 35% of audiences strongly agreed and 44% agreed that the Festivals have given them 'a chance to participate in a must-see event' (*ibid*:24). These findings support the view that the festivals deliver well on

cultural agendas by cultivating more aware, adventurous and confident Scottish audiences. Even so, the SNP Government's National Policy Framework in 2007 made little space for acknowledgement either of the festivals' impact or of the importance of cultural policy in reflecting or developing national identity.

With regard to development of cultural policy, EIF Director Mills and SSCF Director Smith are critical of what they see as a lack of direction or initiative within government, academia and the private sector in Scotland. Mills, on 22 June 2011, expressed the view that, 'for a country which was at the forefront of the enlightenment project, no one appears to be thinking about what Scotland could be in the twenty-first century' and suggested that the systems for devolution 'have not yet been thought through'. However, during his time as Festival Director, the EIF began engaging in strategic activities to support government agendas in new ways.

7.4 Cultural diplomacy

Amongst the new expectations concerning the role that festivals and other creative organisations can play in furthering political agendas that have emerged in the twenty-first century has been the notion that festivals can play an effective role in 'cultural diplomacy' (Bound et al, 2007). In addition to strengthening the local economy, boosting tourism and furthering social and cultural agendas, it is now proposed that festivals and other cultural organisations can usefully help to promote international business and political connections. This has opened out a new way for cultural organisations to become partners of government:

In an increasingly interconnected world, we should no longer think of culture as *subordinate* to politics. Instead we should think of culture as *providing the operating context for* politics [. . .] British public diplomacy will increasingly need to have culture at its heart. (Bound et al 2007:20,25)

The potential for cultural organisations to play an ambassadorial role is especially pertinent in the context of recent shifts affecting the political landscape in

Scotland (McCrone 2004). The decision taken in 1997, by the Scottish electorate, to devolve powers from Westminster to a Scottish Parliament, set in motion a significant transformation in the political landscape. As a result, the potential for key arts organisations within Scotland to play a role in building a positive international profile for a new Scotland has become increasingly apparent. For Mills the chance for the EIF to lead as an instrument of ‘cultural diplomacy’ on behalf of Scotland has been and is viewed as an opportunity to strengthen its valued position with government and to reinforce its own international profile. His previous experience as a Festival Director in Australia had involved working in a strategic way alongside the government but, Baker noted on 11 June 2010, Mills was surprised at the lack of interaction between the festivals and the Scottish Government when he arrived in 2006.

Mills acknowledged in interview on 22 June 2011, that he quickly recognised that, in the UK and Scottish context, ‘soft diplomacy [was] something new’. His conception of the role the EIF might play in this respect accords with emerging discourses on cultural diplomacy which stress that culture should not be seen as ‘a *tool* of public diplomacy’ but rather that the value of cultural activity is its independence and freedom. However, while stating that culture ‘represents and connects people, rather than necessarily government or policy positions’ (Bound et al 2007:12), their discourse also acknowledge that the idea of cultural diplomacy has a commercial aspect and ‘is about the quest for the tourist dollar as well as the battle for hearts and minds in a competitive marketplace’ (ibid: 18).

Cultural diplomacy is therefore a further development of instrumental arguments for supporting culture, this time yoking it with diplomatic agendas which include commercial outcomes. Keating’s view that, for a small nation, more independence in fact implies much more interdependence in international agreements and negotiations (Keating 2001:19-43) has resonance for Scotland which could compensate for relative lack of power and resources by using other qualities such as cultural excellence. This point is affirmed by EIF Director of Sponsorship and Development, Christopher Wynn, on 22 June 2011 who suggests that it tends to be poorer countries who are keen to work in this way, citing the examples of Ireland, Poland and Romania who invest in sending indigenous culture abroad because it

‘gives their countries a good image - a positive message - but it’s the countries that don’t have anything’.

Mills saw that the powerful brand recognition invested in the international festival created potential for the EIF to be a vehicle for achieving cultural awareness of Scotland and forging beneficial relationships between Scotland and other countries. His view was that this was not sufficiently recognised or utilised by the British Council or the Scottish or UK Governments. The potential for the festival to gain a higher profile on its own behalf and possibly to gain more secure funding through acting as an agent of cultural diplomacy provided possible incentives to embrace this role. Therefore both Mills and Baker confirm that, rather than being in response mode to any prevailing government agendas, in terms of international cultural diplomacy the EIF itself has tended to be a proactive advocate of performing this sort of role on behalf of the Scottish Government. It has, for example, already developed the strategy of using Cultivation Events for sponsors and potential sponsors and foreign delegations as outlined in Chapter Six.

Baker explained that the purpose of this programme of Cultivation Events had broadened and that they are now planned ‘to demonstrate to the city how they can use us to make connections’ and also to encourage the government to use the events to gain advantages and benefits. Baker confirms that these events are always linked to visits to a festival show and that, as Managing Director, she approaches the task strategically and before each annual festival:

I write to the Government early, saying which people are coming and which are the countries that have direct connections with us. The government writes back, saying what their priorities are and suggesting who and how they want to meet. (Joanna Baker, 23 September 2010)

The EIF works in partnership with leading Edinburgh hotels such as The Glass House and Missoni who want to show off their facilities and will therefore make them available for these events which are important to both the city and to the Scottish Government. Guest lists are drawn up jointly and Baker gave the example of a city focused event which was co-hosted by Susan Rice, Chair of the Edinburgh

International Book Festival and Chief Executive of Lloyds TSB Scotland and Jenny Dawe, City of Edinburgh Council Leader. She noted that it included speeches by both hosts on the importance of the festivals to the city and to businesses in Scotland and therefore the importance of corporate support for the arts. For example, an event involving the Scottish Government was part of the 2010 EIF programme where the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop, in association with Festivals Edinburgh, hosted the consular corps in Edinburgh and spoke about the festivals' ambitions for the 2012 Olympiad and the 2014 Commonwealth Games. The event was used to encourage these other countries to think about how they could work with Edinburgh and Scotland to achieve higher profile in these games.

However, the EIF's assertion of a more ambassadorial role is not without complications as it can bring to the surface tensions between the city, the Scottish Government and the UK government which have previously not needed to be addressed. The EIF has had to make strategic efforts to negotiate changing political relationships between Edinburgh city, the regional authority and the new national government and between Scotland and the UK, particularly in relation to the 2012 Olympics, and to gain more alert recognition from Westminster that the EIF is a key international organisation for the UK as well as for Scotland. Baker gave an example, describing what had happened in an interview between Mills and Charlotte Higgins of *The Guardian*. She explained that Higgins had asked Mills if the UK Culture Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, was coming to the 2010 festival and Mills had replied that he had been invited but that the EIF had received no response. Higgins then wrote an article pointing out that Hunt was not going to attend 'the greatest cultural event in the world' (Higgins 2010:7) even though he would be in Edinburgh to speak at the Television Festival. This prompted a response from Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, who accepted the invitation and, when he arrived in Edinburgh, received the full EIF 'Cultivation' treatment and attended the Pina Bausch show.

Baker made the point that the usefulness of meeting with Westminster politicians resides, not in exploring specific funding issues, but in reminding the UK government that the EIF is a key cultural asset for them. She noted that the EIF

recognizes that it can be a problem for arts organisations that they are 'slightly off radar' for government if they are not funded directly, and that she works hard to invite all relevant government representatives from the UK and Scotland, including the Secretary of State for Scotland. She pointed out that a political difficulty which the EIF has encountered in trying to work collaboratively is that Westminster and Holyrood 'don't liaise at all' and it is therefore difficult to make things happen bilaterally. This indicates a situation of evolution between the two governments as the practicalities of devolution are worked through, and illustrates the frustrations this causes for those organisations who want, and whose remit it is, to work across the UK and internationally.

Under Mills' leadership, the EIF has seized the initiative of developing international channels and relationships, despite the fact that the role exerts new pressures and can demand difficult decisions since the EIF was not originally set up or funded to work in this way. An example of the tensions which adopting such a role creates was the situation which Baker described on 23 September 2010, where the EIF planned a prominent media event in China in November 2010 featuring a pre-launch of the Chinese companies appearing at the 2011 Festival and highlighting investment and tourism links with China. She explained that this was a new strategy for the EIF, which offered potential business benefits for the Scottish Government, but that it was a risky one because, in November 2010, the budget for the 2011 Festival was not known as CEC and Creative Scotland would not have confirmed their levels of annual public support. The EIF were therefore taking the risk of announcing a range of Chinese programming, a strategy designed to promote the partnership established with the Chinese government which would provide funding for the events announced, without being sure of their financial capacity in 2011 to create a balanced Festival programme. Baker noted that the Festival was concerned that, in the event of public funding being drastically reduced and the Expo Fund not being renewed, it risked being left with a programme dominated by shows funded by international partners. This highlighted the way that the EIF can be hampered by the decision making schedules and economic uncertainties of annual public funding. In the event, the EIF decided to go ahead with the media launch, thus demonstrating how important it has become for it to be seen to be

expanding and exploiting cultural and trade partnerships even though it posed a risk to the overall integrity of the 2011 programme.

The Press Release issued by the EIF to accompany the event included a paragraph on this broader picture:

Working with the British Ambassador and the British Council in Beijing and Shanghai the EIF, in addition to highlighting its Asian companies, is supporting Scotland's and the UK's ambition to cultivate trade, investment and tourism links with China. The Festival is also working on the VisitBritain Trade Mission at the China International Travel Mart in Shanghai promoting all of Edinburgh's Festivals, the city of Edinburgh and Scotland. (EIF Press Release 15 November 2010)

The media event attracted high levels of press attention both within the UK and in China.³⁹ The early announcement of the 2011 programme was accompanied by endorsements from the Scottish Government, including the following from Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop (cited in STV News 2010):

China is one of the most important forces in the world economy and significant links already exist between our two countries. Promoting Scotland to a truly international audience and developing the cultural ties between our two nations will further strengthen those links and I'm delighted that the Edinburgh International Festival is doing just that.

Press coverage indicated an awareness of the new roles which arts organisations are obliged to play, the stakes they are playing for and the conflicts of interest this can produce. *The Guardian* reported on the significance of Mills' undertaking a lecture tour in China in partnership with the Chinese culture ministry and VisitBritain:

³⁹ An internal email on the launch listed 40 print, broadcast and online media at the press conference in Shanghai on 17 November 2010 including Chinese, Indian, Vietnamese and Malayan media.

Visits by Chinese tourists are expected to double in 2014 and Mills hopes that visitors to the London Olympics in 2012 and the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014 will be persuaded to detour to see the Edinburgh festivals. These links underscore Mills' increasing reliance on foreign sources to fund his programme as UK arts organisations face increasingly tight public and private sector spending. (Carrell 2010:9)

The Independent questioned the morality of a strategy which relied on working with a government known to exert censorship and Mills was obliged to rebut suggestions that EIF programming could be compromised by the availability of funding for work favoured by the Chinese government, 'there was no pressure at all, and every assistance to put us in touch with a broad range of artists' (Sherwin 2011:11). In February 2011 the senior managers of the Festivals and Festivals Edinburgh made a tour of India funded by the British Council in Scotland and a further tour of Asian countries was arranged for Mills and EIF marketing and press office staff for March 2011. The EIF is working in a new way and an awareness of the potential of cultural diplomacy can also be seen more broadly in the UK. For example in August 2010 it was reported that a new cultural agreement had been signed between the British and Indian governments with endorsements from the DCMS saying 'it fits the wider government ambition: we want to build closer links with the Indian government. Culture is a big part of that' (Arts Professional 2010).

This signals a new government awareness of the potential usefulness of culture - not simply to enhance foreign governments' understanding of Britishness (as British Council programmes of the past attempted) - but as a tool to enhance UK and Scottish trade relationships and this is an approach which is now part of the way that the EIF operates. At a staff meeting on March 11 2011, Mills reported that international work was 'ever increasingly important' and stated that the EIF was at the forefront of international promotion for the Scottish Government. He added that, for the EIF in 2011, it made the difference between being 'well and not well funded in future' and that these were 'tough times' and it was better for the EIF to be seen to be 'engaging very directly in international opportunities for Scotland'. He stressed that, for the EIF, the increase in investment by foreign governments as international partners, 'made all the difference' as it became more difficult to

raise corporate sponsorship in Scotland. The engagement in cultural diplomacy is therefore a logical progression of Mills' strategy of partnership with foreign governments to augment the EIF's finances and has moved into the territory of supporting trade and diplomatic agendas using the same skills and developing them within the organization.

Notwithstanding the long-term strategic and economic reasoning that, for Mills, underlies the EIF's commitment to an active role in cultural diplomacy, Baker attests to the fact that the development of this role does, in the immediate term, present 'a real resource issue' for the EIF. She explains that neither the city of Edinburgh nor the Scottish Government is properly able to take a lead in organizing programmes for international delegations:

It's not strictly speaking the Scottish Government's responsibility. Scotland is not really geared up. It's a problem of resource, the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Office do this sort of stuff all the time but it isn't quite replicated in Scotland. (Interview with Joanna Baker, 20 September 2010)

Baker notes that the EIF has made strenuous efforts to get CEC or the Scottish Government to assist financially with managing the delegations from abroad who want to visit the EIF so that collective benefits can be generated. But it still falls to the EIF to do the bulk of the work: 'we haven't cracked how to do it consistently unless we do it and there is a cost and capacity to this' with a great deal of pressure on Baker and her team. She described the EIF as 'the magnet' which attracts foreign delegations but acknowledged that there is a limit to the resource that the organisation can or should give to cultural diplomacy initiatives which may not directly benefit the festival itself.

An illustration of the way the EIF's approach exerts demands on the organisation while the potential outcomes are unclear is the energy and time committed to working with the Cultural Olympiad in 2012. In 2009 Mills had commented in a number of newspaper articles that this priority for the DCMS represented a real opportunity to promote the EIF and other Edinburgh festivals as important UK

national cultural assets with the potential to be major contributors to both the 2012 Cultural Olympiad and the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. On 20 September 2010, Baker described how, in 2010, the EIF began working with the Commonwealth Public Diplomacy Campaign 2012 which had synergy with a Foreign Office campaign to improve diplomacy abroad. She noted that the UK Foreign Office civil servants had begun to recognise that organisations like the EIF can get key messages across about country, values, perceptions, kinds of branding ‘more effectively than the Ambassador intoning in front of a pot plant’ and Mills was included as a Credible Witness on the revitalised Foreign Office website in 2010.

On 20 January 2010 the EIF began to plan an advocacy campaign with Festivals Edinburgh to promote support for augmented festival programmes in Edinburgh designed to appeal to visitors to the 2012 London Olympics. At a meeting between Baker and staff of Festivals Edinburgh it was agreed that the campaign should be aimed simultaneously at the Scottish Government and Westminster and that also key countries would be identified which should be approached as partners for the festivals in co-operation with the Scottish Government’s Cultural Strategy team. The aim was to brief the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs and the First Minister on the importance of bringing top people to the festivals. Baker and Liddell also noted that the Scottish Government had announced plans that, despite continuing rumblings in the press about the financial mismanagement of *The Gathering* in 2010, it would promote another Year of Homecoming event in 2012 with a focus on Scotland’s culture and creativity. Baker and Liddell were keen to invite the right people but needed to negotiate the relationship between Scotland and Westminster. For instance it was not clear, at the meeting on the 20 January 2010, what etiquette should be observed in terms of who should issue invitations to the festivals as part of the Cultural Olympiad. If invitations to foreign dignitaries came from the First Minister of Scotland would that create sensitivities with the UK Minister?

Elections were also due in the UK in May 2010 and in Scotland in May 2011 so Baker and Liddell were aware that, by 2012, both governments could have changed and new relationships would need to be forged. A further complication was the late appointment of Ruth Mackenzie as Director of the Cultural Olympiad which

introduced a further dimension to the campaign to promote an Edinburgh strategy. A Steering Group for Festivals 2012 - 2014 Strategy was formed and Festival Directors were asked to develop plans for flagship festival projects. However, in the event, although Baker met with Mackenzie as soon as she was appointed, Mackenzie only received confirmation of the budget for the Cultural Olympiad in May 2011 and, despite the ambitious plans of Festivals Edinburgh and the EIF, they were ultimately at the mercy of organisers in London plus a shortage of funds for cultural projects.

By July 2011, the only event finalised for 2012 in Scotland was the *Speed of Light* project which the EIF was leading on behalf of all the festivals. Detailed work on other projects was being done but it was not clear whether more funding would come from London. This disappointing situation appeared to confirm the difficulty of getting events in Scotland 'on the radar' of London organisers and to corroborate the conclusions of Good (1999:23) that 'National Organizing Committees have struggled to appreciate or understand the role and significance of the cultural games and have either been unwilling or uncertain of how to integrate the arts with the sporting games'.

While the EIF had expended time and effort on this campaign to include Edinburgh in the Cultural Olympiad, a different cultural diplomacy project emerged. In 2009 Mills had floated the idea of an International Culture Summit involving all the Culture Ministers from countries involved in the Olympic Games. In December 2011, it was announced that an International Culture Summit was to be held on 13 and 14 August 2012 in Edinburgh, the day after the Closing Ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic Games (Scottish Government, 2011). In partnership with the DCMS, the British Council and the EIF, Culture Ministers and experts from around the world are invited to 'share ideas and discuss the power, position and profile of the arts, culture and the creative industries'. The press release notes that it will be the first time that 'Culture Ministers, along with prominent artists, thinkers and others charged with the formulation and implementation of cultural policy' will meet and that the event will be augmented by the backdrop of the Festival City where artists from over 75 nations, participating in the Edinburgh International Festival and its partner festivals, 'offer the perfect frame for this ground-breaking

event' (ibid). The conference theme is Culture as an International Dialogue and the programme is organised around the three strategic strands of cultural diplomacy, sponsorship and the creative industries and the role of technology.

For Mills and Baker, the leading role played by the EIF and Festivals Edinburgh in delivering an internationally politically prestigious cultural event closely allied with the Olympic Games is seen as a significant achievement. The event is a collaboration at the highest level between the Scottish Government, the UK Government, the EIF and the British Council. Invitations to international dignitaries are issued jointly by Fiona Hyslop, Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, with Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport. The press release references the concept of soft power and notes that culture has moved up the political agenda. The EIF has also achieved modest funding from the Scottish Government to employ an administrator to manage the extra workload of co-ordinating this international project which offers great potential benefits to Edinburgh and Scotland. The aim is that the Summit should become a regular event associated with the festivals.

However, in spite of the success of this initiative there are political and financial frustrations and risks in assuming the cultural diplomacy role. When I asked him, on 22 June 2011, whether he thinks the EIF's enhanced relationship with the government in Scotland can go further over the next ten years, Mills replied that it was 'not sufficiently embedded to be secure'. He also, from the Australian perspective, identified 'an enormous amount of inefficient navel-gazing and grappling with lack of empire' as a malaise impeding real development of cultural diplomacy in the UK generally. This outsider's view identifies a lack of political vision within the UK about how to use culture to enhance its image and identity internationally, as well as some disappointment about the extent to which the Scottish Government has grasped the importance of culture in promoting a new Scotland, or found ways to facilitate its exploitation. Referring to attempts to get UK cultural diplomacy projects off the ground, Mills identified 'disco-ordination and disconnection between government departments' as a problem which frustrated progress and aspiration, rather than a real lack of money for cultural

projects, and concluded that ‘relationships here are not mature enough. No-one talks in a way which is co-operative’.

These views, from an energetic and optimistic Festival Director who advocates seizing the potential the ambassadorial role presents for arts organisations, indicate that the current systems of government, and those administering them, in the UK and Scotland, are not yet geared up fully to utilise the skills, contacts and prestige which major cultural festivals can offer and to exploit the ‘soft power’ benefits of cultural diplomacy.

7.5 Reflections

To restrict each actor to their private spheres of comfort would be folly, i.e. Government to politics; Creative Scotland to cultural development; Enterprise Agencies to business development. (Knell & Fleming 2008:53)

This chapter explores how the role of festivals has changed and continues to change according to the prevailing currents of political ideology. The recent experience of the EIF confirms that the relationship between festivals and governments has changed in recent years and, in the twenty-first century, festivals are expected to work in closer partnership with government in order to deliver a range of politically desired outcomes locally, nationally and internationally. Earlier research has shown how pressures on cultural organisations reflect the ‘creative industries’ influence on cultural policy which has brought in its wake an increasingly instrumental approach to support for arts and culture (Pratt and Hesmondhalgh, 2005; Schlesinger, 2007; O’Connor, 2009). Whereas this approach has occasionally been denounced, its prevalence and general influence over the cultural policy environment is undeniable, even though the UK Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in 2004 put forward the following plea that the value of culture be judged in its own terms:

Too often politicians have been forced to debate culture in terms only of its instrumental benefits to other agendas, education, the reduction of

crime, improvements in wellbeing, explaining, or in some instances almost apologizing for, our investment in culture only in terms of something else. In political and public discourse in this country we have avoided the more difficult approach of investigating, questioning and celebrating what culture actually does in and of itself. (Jowell, DCMS, 2004).

In spite of this and other instances of soul-searching about the meaning of culture and the purpose of policy interventions in this arena (McMaster 2008), the typical experience of many cultural organisations over recent years has been that, as creative industries thinking has been in the ascendant and has exerted greater influence over cultural policy, the requirements bearing upon them to contribute to delivery of economic and socio-cultural policy goals has grown exponentially.

The EIF case study also strongly reflects circumstances which are specific to the current Scottish political landscape. In post-devolution Scotland, a new opportunity has arisen to consider afresh what culture is and why it should be supported. Yet, despite what many saw as a promising early development in the landmark St Andrews Day Speech given by then First Minister Jack McConnell in 2003, it may be argued that the cultural policy that has emerged from the Scottish Government appears to be more indebted to creative industries discourse than to any meaningful wish to interrogate what culture is and can do for Scotland and its citizens. The 2006 government publication *Scotland's Culture*, which was their response to the extensive recommendations of the Cultural Commission Report (2005) advocated that cultural policy should be about collaboration with other agencies to deliver economic and social benefits. This finds echoes in the instrumentalist and economically driven re-design of cultural policies which many other countries, including for example Canada (Brualt, 2005) have experienced in recent years. However, in Scotland, this collaboration with other agencies has been slow to emerge.

By 2011 the UK Coalition Government had reverted to affirming a commitment to the creative economy ideas which, in spite of the doubts of critics about the data supporting creative industries theory (Garnham 2005; Elliott 2007; Seaman 2011), and the ubiquity and hollowness of the mantra of creativity (Schlesinger 2010) are

now clearly and relatively unquestioningly embedded in UK government cultural policy. This is illustrated by Ed Vaizey, MP, UK Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries who comments ‘it always surprises me when people consider culture and the creative industries to be separate entities’ (DCMS 2011). However, it is notable that the funding of cultural organisations remains within the provenance of cultural departments whose resources are limited and that better resourced government departments devoted to business and enterprise have generally not been drawn into providing financial support for cultural and arts organisations such as the Edinburgh festivals, in spite of their creative industries credentials.⁴⁰

It is evident from the evidence presented in this chapter which was gathered from interviews, observation of meetings, textual analysis of documents and other sources, that the EIF has been pragmatic in responding to the multiplicity of new political demands and expectations imposed upon it and has also been pro-active in seeking to exploit new opportunities to promote itself and Scotland internationally. In relation to the requirement to foster economic growth through encouraging tourism and providing employment, the EIF and other Edinburgh-based festivals have acquired proficiency in the language of impact achievement and they have become adept at gathering (via consultants) and deploying the sort of evidence of performance which satisfies the current political needs of their paymasters.

In terms of the EIF’s response to the social agendas imposed by government, this has necessitated some re-organisation of its activities with more investment of staff time and other resources in educational outreach and in programmes of work designed to increase rates of participation and engagement. But the experience of the EIF suggests that this restructuring has been accompanied by a ready sense of ownership of these activities. In company with other major arts organisations in the early 1990s, an education and outreach role was imposed on the EIF by

⁴⁰ At an International conference, Creative Clusters 2007 in London at a session on *The Creative economy: The next ten years*⁴⁰ senior officials from the DCMS were on a panel with Will Hutton, Chief Executive of The Work Foundation and talked about the difficulties that they, as a relatively small government department, had in persuading the more weighty Treasury or Trade and Industry departments to work with them.

stakeholders in order to satisfy access and diversity agendas. However, Hobson and Baker indicate that Programme Development activities are now conceived and delivered in a way that festival staff see as expressing, exemplifying and extending the integrity of the festival's core artistic programme.

Evidence from interviews and discussions with EIF staff suggest that a stimulus from government to festivals to perform new roles in, for example, building wider access to and participation in the arts or in promoting social inclusion and cohesiveness or in fulfilling particular cultural agendas such as reflecting indigenous cultures and languages can result in useful and ambitious partnership initiatives and programmes of work. But the ability to integrate new and additional responsibilities successfully is dependent on adequate resourcing. For example the Expo Fund stimulates ambitious and high profile projects for a period but the financial support is time-limited.

The need to satisfy burgeoning political demands by producing meaningful data on the extent to which socio-cultural objectives have been achieved represents another concern and a challenge that is now shared widely by arts organisations. A common approach is to adopt multiple and varied research methods but, even so, festivals have been hamstrung by the inherent methodological weaknesses and deficiencies to which many earlier critics have drawn attention (Galloway 2009:143).

As well as accepting a role in fostering economic growth, promoting social inclusion and cohesiveness and achieving artistic profile, the EIF has also, to some extent, taken it upon itself to seek to develop a closer relationship with government in order to play an active ambassadorial role in furthering international diplomacy and improving trade and tourism partnerships for Scotland and for the UK. Mills' leadership of the Festival has been characterised by a strong commitment to cultural diplomacy which, in part, reflects what he sees as a crucially important opportunity to strengthen the EIF's valued position with government and to reinforce its own international profile. Accordingly, Mills has created capacity within the organisational structure of the EIF so that the Managing Director post has responsibility for developing external relationships and this has allowed the

Festival to initiate new strategies of advocacy on behalf of itself, the other festivals and the Scottish Government.

Internationally, a growing awareness of the potential of a cultural diplomacy role for arts organisations has become the focus of high profile international symposia and research. But, in spite of claims that the arts can uniquely offer a neutral platform for cultural exchange and bring peoples and countries together in a way that will bring economic benefits (Bound et al, 2007), the translation of theory into practice is slow and the benefits and costs for arts organisations are not formally acknowledged in structural terms. Although the EIF has chosen to readily embrace a role for itself in this regard, the advent of cultural diplomacy might well be characterised as a further imposition of government agendas on already overloaded arts organizations and Mills has noted the frustrations he has encountered in trying to work with government bureaucracies not attuned to collaborative or creative ways of working. For the EIF, the burdens involved in adjusting to a much wider political remit than ever before are significant and expanding since the activities and skill-sets involved in creating and promoting the artistic programme are quite different from those required to widen access and diversity in Edinburgh or those needed to promote Scotland's business interests abroad.

At the same time, stronger relationships with stakeholders and collaboration with their agendas has in some ways empowered organisations such as the EIF to help steer rather than simply respond to cultural policy developments. The establishment of the Festivals Forum and Festivals Edinburgh is seen as an achievement which the EIF has not only contributed to but which can be claimed as coming from their own initiatives as noted by Mills on 3 February 2010: 'Festivals Edinburgh is *our* creation. We have done that ourselves, not anyone else'. Also, the EIF has taken on a role as partner, adviser and leader in the formation of cultural policy at a local, national and international level. A strategy of developing ever closer partnerships with government is intended to support the organisation's survival but, as Mills has observed and as the history of the EIF confirms, local and national governments can be volatile, unpredictable and time limited.

Baker concurs with Mill's view that developing closer working relationships with government, particularly with the civil servants who deliver government policy, is essential in order to protect the public funding mix which enables the EIF to function and to stage a core festival which retains its challenging aspects. However, this awareness of the strategic advantages of cultivating partnership with government is accompanied by an assertion of the historic and enduring importance of critical independence in enabling festivals to perform their own cultural and artistic mission. Mills has commented that the very nature of festivals is 'fundamentally anti-government' and 'anti-establishment' referring to their historic roots and also to the importance of programming art which goes beyond boundaries, borders and received ideas, a role which is at the heart of the EIF's operation. It is clear that organizers at the EIF would regard any effort on the part of government to influence cultural and artistic matters (e.g. programming decisions) as wholly inappropriate and there is therefore a complex balance to be maintained between strategic partnering, for example to promote improved international relations, and maintaining the independence as well as the skills and resources to create the ambitious and demanding programmes which characterise the Festival. As the differing sorts of relationships that exist between festivals and government become more multi-faceted, organisations such as the EIF face increasing challenges not only in negotiating these relationships skillfully, but also in managing public perceptions; for instance, the idea that the availability of additional funding from abroad may influence programming decisions or that governments at home may provide funding for programmes which suit their own agendas.

The findings presented here suggest that, on the whole, the arrival of new thinking on the part of policy-makers in relation to the instrumental role festivals may play in delivering economic and social policy agendas can act as a useful spur for organisations such as the EIF. It can encourage festivals to widen their agendas and perform across a range of functions from boosting tourism to education to building international connections. The opening up of festivals to a wide range of stakeholders (e.g. audiences of all ages, tourism agencies, local and international

businesses, etc) and not just to cultural or artistic elites may well be regarded as an entirely positive development.

However, the question of how it is possible for a festival such as the EIF to continue presenting the core programme, given the weight of expectations and new agendas now attached to its operation, coupled with a reduction in resources, is unavoidable. As discussed earlier, the EIF's Business Plan for 2009-2012 had to be amended because of funding cuts which could not only jeopardise the artistic aspirations for 2012 and 2014 but make it more difficult to create the core festival. Without additional funding to support the extra activities planned, there must be grounds for concern that a diversion of energies and resources could, at some point, prove damaging to the Festival's ability to sustain its artistic mission. The evidence suggests that a number of tensions are already affecting the EIF and these include: the difficulty of creating a world class programme on a lower budget than competitors and with an inadequate venue infrastructure; the risk taking involved in engaging in long term international co-productions when managing on an annual income which is dependent on political and economic variables; the extra work and resources required to manage an enhanced role in facilitating international trade and business relationships for the city of Edinburgh and the Scottish Government, and the frustrations of trying to create ambitious international cultural diplomacy initiatives working across a number of different UK and Scottish Government departments which appear to be in a state of transition (or, as Mills suggests, 'schlerosis').

The EIF is in a political context where the relationship between governments in Scotland and the UK are in a process of change. However, the more instrumental, creative economy driven cultural policy, which is making a variety of new social, cultural and economic demands on the festivals, remains in place. It is arguable that, as an experienced and dynamic arts festival, the EIF is programmed to present its compliance with new demands as the exploitation of new opportunities and to use its position as a leader to propose new and creative initiatives. While there are elements of pragmatism in this response to what appears to be the inevitable, the evidence presented in this and the previous chapter is that a festival such as the EIF has particular skills to offer to the process of cultural policy

development and to building a culturally confident national identity for Scotland. The EIF's strategy, while aimed at assuring its own survival, has also benefited Edinburgh and Scotland by bringing an ease with flexibility and innovations to the table. The EIF's belief in itself and in its cultural mission has acted as a catalyst in the establishment of companion international festivals of quality in Edinburgh and because of its reputation it has attracted Festival Directors with ambition and vision. Mills' strategy of engaging in new international initiatives for the EIF in cultural diplomacy, while it is a way of building profile and possible new sources of government support for the EIF, could also be said to offer an enlightened vision of the way that the Scottish and UK governments might operate globally in partnership with cultural institutions. However, such initiatives require change in government institutions and the fostering of new partnerships driven by the festivals, with the concomitant need for personnel with expertise, energy, and time, resources which not all cultural festivals are able to accommodate. Although the EIF was originally established and continues to exist to create a festival for three weeks every August, its survival now appears to depend on performing an increasingly demanding range of roles throughout every week of the year with a growing number of partners.

CHAPTER EIGHT - CONCLUSIONS

Introduction: The changing role of international arts festivals

The coming of the festivals, in the 65 years since the Second World War, has played a key role in Edinburgh's transformation from a provincial city with a decaying city centre, to the thriving international city we see today. (Joyce McMillan, in *Festivals Edinburgh*, 2011:4)

This thesis set out to examine the changing role of international arts festivals. The phenomenon referred to as 'festivalisation', characterised by the launch of many new festivals in recent years, has transformed the competitive landscape in which long-established organizations, such as the EIF, operate. Through an in-depth examination of the experience of the EIF, this thesis has set out to demonstrate how changes in the political and competitive environment have introduced complex new requirements and expectations as to the role international festivals can and should perform in the twenty-first century. To the extent that new priorities and demands have served to re-shape and extend the sense of purpose of festival organisations, this has important implications for the end-users of festivals - artists and audiences - as well as for the arts organisations involved in delivery and those responsible for designing and implementing policies aimed at supporting arts and cultural festivals.

A significant amount of relevant literature has examined the history of festivals and the development of cultural industries and cultural policy. But little or no previous research has focused specifically on how a more competitive, politicised and pressurised landscape has affected international arts festivals in the twenty-first century. The use of the EIF as a case study in this project, made possible through the unique opportunity created by the Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) that supported this thesis, has facilitated analysis at close quarters of the impact of changing environmental pressures on the strategic thinking and approach to operations of a leading player in the field. The concentration on the EIF has focused the study on the recent drift towards utilising international arts festivals as

a means of supporting urban development and of achieving other economic and socio-cultural policy goals advocated by creative industries discourse.

The findings which emerge from this research are based on close study of three key areas of activity of the EIF: communications and marketing; the growing importance of partnerships; and, negotiation and management of evolving government agendas. The specific research questions which the case study set out to investigate were:

- How have the activities of international arts festivals in relation to marketing, branding and communications changed in recent years on account of growing international competition?
- To what extent have levels of reliance on building and use of partnerships as a source of advantage changed?
- How has the relationship between festivals and Governments changed? To what extent are festivals required to play new roles in delivering political agendas?

The findings of this project confirm that the activities and priorities of international festivals have changed markedly in the twenty-first century on account of a shifting economic, competitive and policy landscape. Festival managers are highly aware of the more competitive landscape and the need to satisfy an increasingly complex array of demands on the part of funders and policy-makers and they have adjusted their thinking and their operations accordingly.

Recognizing the need to distinguish themselves in a more crowded marketplace, festivals have become much more professionalised in their marketing and communications activities. Pressures bearing upon festivals to work harder to distinguish themselves and court interest from international visitors are in many cases shared by City councils and local authorities who, because of the influence of creative industries theory on cultural policy, are increasingly concerned to deploy cultural organisations and events in promoting the attractions of their localities as tourist destinations. Therefore, effective use of partnerships on the part of festivals is increasingly recognized as a source of advantage and, as with marketing, festivals must devote much more energy and resource to management

of partnerships now than in the past. The results of this case study also suggest that (although there are particularities in the Scottish situation) festivals are subject to an increasingly complex range of expectations in relation to delivery of political agendas.

Based on the findings which emerge from this research into the recent experiences of the EIF, this thesis argues that festival organisations are responding to festivalisation in a number of ways, many of which can be seen as conducive to improved and more professionalised delivery of public policy goals but some of which raise important questions about the ability of arts and cultural organisations to fully prioritise and pursue their own artistic agendas.

Section 8.1 below provides a brief summary and analysis of the findings of the dissertation while section 8.2 offers critical reflections and conclusions which emerge from the research. Finally, section 8.3 acknowledges some limitations in the project overall and identifies areas which have emerged as particularly significant during the course of this research and which deserve further development in future research work.

8. 1 Key findings

8.1.1 Marketing, Branding and Communications

The tourism industry is a business, and as far as the industry is concerned, culture is not. (Ritsaert ten Cate, 1997:2)

This research focused on the activities of marketing, branding and communications and the question of whether, in a more competitive environment, the level of emphasis on such activities within international arts festivals has increased. Looking at the experience of the EIF, a notable finding is that the department of Marketing and Communications had doubled in size over the last ten years in terms of staff numbers. Evidence drawn from interviews confirmed that this adjustment reflects more than the ‘lip service’ which critics warn against when discussing the importance of arts organisations making a ‘robust commitment to marketing

strategies' (Hooley et al, 1993:4). Not only have the number of specialist staff involved in marketing and management of media communications increased significantly, but there has been a sea-change in organisational culture to bring about greater awareness, at all levels, of the strong role that marketing, brand imaging and management of new communication technologies can play in raising visibility and in building and sustaining the EIF's competitive profile. The structuring of the organisation is designed so that the Director of Marketing and Communication is part of the senior management group and therefore able to influence decision making as advocated by theorists of commercial business structures (Cornelissen 2004:130; Shulz and Shulz 2004).

An important insight which emerged from the empirical research was that these activities were part of a process of professionalisation of festival organisations which was recommended in a number of impact studies and consultants' reports (East Midlands Arts 2003, Graham Devlin Associates 2001, AEA Consulting 2006). As the quote above indicates, the context for this is a perception that, for industry people, culture is not a business and, in broader terms, that the arts organisations who manage its production and distribution are not professionally run in the same way as those in other industries (Hewison 2006) and also Colbert's views that the idea of cultural management can suffer a 'legitimacy' problem both within the organisation itself and with academics in the field of management (Colbert 2011:261).

Findings confirm that greater competition has acted as a catalyst for the introduction of more professional practices in management of marketing and communications. Recognition of the need to ensure a competitive position in a more crowded international landscape acted as the trigger for progressively more attention being paid to marketing and branding activity and to management of the organisation's external and internal profile over the past decade. This re-direction of resources and energies towards marketing, brand management and engagement with new communication technologies was accelerated by the arrival of Brian McMaster as Festival Director in 1992 who brought with him a Marketing Manager, Joanna Baker, who has since become Managing Director of the organization. This input of particular expertise has produced a number of positive benefits, including

those associated with successive brand review exercises, which have been that staff at all levels of the organisation have had the opportunity to reflect on, understand and reinforce their commitment to the core artistic mission and agenda of the EIF.

However, to the extent that marketing and media communications have drawn energy and attention away from other priorities, there may be a danger of sidelining some activities - for instance, artistic programming - which are essential to the quality of the experience delivered by the festival. In this particular case of the EIF, no evidence was uncovered to suggest that demands on staff time related to marketing have caused concern or resentment amongst staff or other stakeholders. However, since levels of resourcing for festivals are generally stable at best, and have recently decreased for the EIF, high levels of competitive pressure to invest more in marketing and management of external profile could potentially have damaging consequences if resources must be re-directed away from other areas.

Another possible concern associated with a growing emphasis on marketing and management of brand image and external profile is that the nature of the programme a festival offers becomes excessively influenced by marketing considerations. Rather than being driven by an artistic vision or agenda, it may be shaped by a focus on marketing techniques designed to maximize ticket sales, with negative implications for cultural and artistic agendas. Klaic warns against a shifting of fundraising and marketing considerations from facilitating the artistic objectives of festivals to becoming the *raison d'être* (Klaic 2009:223). Earlier literature on marketing within cultural organisations acknowledges this possibility but argues that, in the cultural and arts sectors, this is ameliorated because, in contrast with the commercial sector, the emphasis is on marketing the product which arts organisations wish to offer the public as opposed to finding out what consumers wish to buy (Kapferer 2008; Colbert 2011). Evidence from the EIF case study supports this latter point of view: marketing staff are clear that as much effort is put into articulating and 'selling' the more difficult and challenging aspects of the programme as is put into marketing the starrier and more easily marketable material.

8.1.2 Partnerships

Festivals' core business - running a festival means a constant search for new partnerships at home and abroad. (Klaic 2009:105)

A further question explored in the research is whether, against a background of much increased competition amongst international arts festivals in the twenty-first century, there is greater emphasis now than in the past on forging and utilising partnerships as advocated above and, if so, what the implications may be. The findings of this research are that, whereas the EIF has long used partnerships of one kind or another in order to derive benefits, the nature and extent of reliance on partnerships has changed and increased in recent years and partnerships represent an area of genuine opportunity. One reason for the impetus to form partnerships has been pressure from local and city funding authorities who, increasingly, are keen to harness local cultural, creative and arts organisations and events in promoting the attractions of specific locations as tourist destinations. Since the late 1990s, recognition of the potential for arts organisations and events to play a role in the branding of cities both as hubs of creativity and as attractive places to visit has increased (Florida, 2002; Garnham, 2005; O'Connor, 2010).

An important and original finding of this case study research of the EIF has been that, if a number of festivals work together to build the profile or brand image of a city as an attractive destination for festival-goers, the strategy of working as partners rather than in opposition can deliver extensive benefits to all participants in terms of raised collective profile. The City of Edinburgh Council's (CEC) innovation in harnessing the EIF and other international Edinburgh-based festivals to work in partnership to promote Edinburgh as the Festival City has proved an exceptional and successful model of 'co-opetition' (Brandenburger and Nalebuff 1996). Although the idea of festivals which are long-standing rivals working harmoniously towards a collective goal may at first trigger scepticism, the EIF's experience in this respect demonstrates how a collective marketing endeavour can bring benefits for all.

The fact that festivals are being deployed by local authorities in 'place' marketing strategies is not the only reason why they have increasingly found that forging and developing relationships of partnership has become a core aspect of their activity. Klaic (2009) has argued that, increasingly, the management of festivals involves outreach and building of relationships and partnerships (for instance with education and tourism bodies) and Fenton (2008) has suggested that, artistically, new style festivals 'no longer require a director at the top of the pyramid but a creative networker - a curator who makes the festival contemporary, sustainable, innovative and ready for the future' (2008:202). This research confirms that skills in developing and managing relationships are vital to the artistic, political and organizational survival of festivals. The experience of the EIF shows how, for example, relationships with sponsors have undergone change in recent years and have become re-defined as entailing partnership rather than patronage - a process that has required careful management.

In addition, forging partnerships with international governments has become more important, in this case as a means of securing high profile artistic inputs (performers, shows, co-productions etc.) from overseas, often at reduced cost, that strengthen the programme of the festival and, in turn, help to distinguish it from international competitors. An active strategy of working with international governments led by Festival Director Jonathan Mills has been advantageous in two ways: it has enabled the festival to make international quality and innovative programming a key selling point for Edinburgh and, by reducing production costs, it has helped plug the gap left by reductions in public support.

In the face of growing competition from a plethora of both new and incumbent festivals, international arts events and organisations have turned increasingly to the development of partnerships with external bodies, including private sponsors, local authorities and other public funders, 'rival' arts organisations and international governments. Partnerships are now recognized by the EIF as a major source of potential advantage - a way of asserting and re-asserting what the festival is and of maintaining the funding mix which is needed to protect the core festival and, in Baker's words, 'put the programme on the stage'. Consequently, a far greater level of managerial resource and energy is being invested in the task of

forging and maintaining a range of local, national and international partnerships than would have been the case in the past.

However, at the same time as delivering advantages and cost-efficiencies, partnerships can involve dangers for arts organisations. As with marketing, festivals must count the cost of the additional energy and resource devoted to management of partnerships now than in the past in terms of activities and priorities which may have been displaced. Whereas partnership works well where objectives overlap, it becomes challenging when discrepancies exist between the agendas of the parties to the partnership. As Baker argues, partnership working is 'not a constraint if the partners can identify areas of mutual interest'. However she also acknowledges that 'the success of the EIF is dependent on independence'. Therefore, to the extent that a partnership strategy threatens perceptions of the organisation's independence to pursue its own artistic goals, it involves risk.

Although the evidence surrounding the EIF's relationships with partners suggests that these have generally been harmonious, it remains the case that there will be instances of mismatch between the agenda of any festival organisation and that of its sponsors, funders or of local, regional or national authorities. Therefore, although evidently conducive to a range of valuable advantages, partnerships can also necessitate concessions and a partial loss of independence to pursue the organisation's own agenda which, as the number of partnerships undertaken multiplies, may eventually create challenges and complications in terms of management.

8.1.3 Changing Political Agendas

Another aspect of this research has been to examine how the relationship between festivals and governments has changed in recent years. Earlier research has noted how, as creative industries thinking has exerted greater influence over cultural policy, many cultural organisations have found themselves called upon to assist in delivery of an ever-widening array of political aspirations (Pratt and Hesmondhalgh 2005; Schlesinger 2007). This research set out to examine to what extent

international festivals such as the EIF are expected or required to play new roles in delivering political agendas in the twenty-first century.

The EIF case study is complicated by local circumstances in that the decision taken in 1997 to devolve powers from Westminster to a Scottish Parliament set in motion a massive change in the political landscape in Scotland (McCrone 2004). The emergence of a Scottish Government with aspirations to develop an international profile for the newly devolved Scottish polity has naturally turned attention to the role the EIF can play as a tool of 'cultural diplomacy' (Bound et al, 2007). For its part, the EIF has regarded the chance to lead, as an instrument of cultural diplomacy, as a unique opportunity to strengthen its position with Scottish and UK governments and to reinforce its international profile.

The experience of the EIF shows how, against a background of now wide acceptance of the creative industries 'doctrine' (Schlesinger, 2007) and also in the narrower context of shifts affecting the political landscape locally in Scotland in the twenty-first century (McCrone 2004), the role and sense of purpose of international festivals has been influenced and re-shaped by newly emerging political and cultural expectations. As the EIF has become part of what has been designated the creative economy, new expectations have arisen in relation to the role the festival can play in strengthening the local economy and tourism as well as promoting international business and political connections.

The deployment of festivals in pursuit of such aims is not new. McMaster, interviewed on 15 November 2011, gave the example, during his period as Director at Welsh Opera, of the company giving a performance in Tokyo where the Secretary of State for Wales attended the dinner afterwards for the purposes of advancing trade with Japanese counterparts. He described the outcomes in this case as the establishment a new Japanese factory in Wales and the repayment of Welsh Opera's deficit by the Welsh Government.

The potential for festivals, as agents of cultural diplomacy, to gain higher profile, engage more proactively and visibly with the development of cultural strategies and policy and, possibly, to obtain increased or more secure funding offer

incentives to embrace these roles. However, as demonstrated by the experience of the EIF (which, by and large, has embraced positively the additional government demands and requirements imposed in recent years), payoffs are uncertain and therefore meeting growing expectations without sufficient resources can be problematic.

Festival Director Jonathan Mills is critical of the fact that, at the same time as the EIF is successful in delivering on the numerous political goals with which it is tasked, the festival has not received the level of resources needed to perform these functions adequately. Despite increasing emphasis on the economic benefits that festivals generate, the EIF is still funded through ‘meagre’ cultural budgets⁴¹ rather than through any partnership support or collaboration via more business-oriented and well resourced departments. The benefits, in terms of protection for artistic integrity and freedom to engage in risk-taking work, of remaining within the portfolio of culture as opposed to business departments are acknowledged by the organisation. Even so, an evident lack of recognition for the EIF’s success in supporting cultural and economic goals, a role which the government has advocated for culture in Scotland, is clearly a source of frustration:

No doubt that if this phenomenon was bred in any other city in the world, the response of the city council would have been exuberant, not muted. And expressed in two ways: proper funding and proper reconciliation of infrastructure. Infrastructure investment - there hasn’t been any, given what we have brought into the city. (Interview with Jonathan Mills, 3 February 2010)

8.2 Critical reflections and Conclusions

⁴¹ In 2006 the DCMS had never exceeded 0.34% of total government expenditure in the UK. In 2010 the figure for Culture was cut from £1.4 billion to £1.1 billion and the DCMS departmental spend, at £2 billion, was the lowest of all departments on a total spend of approximately £387.8 billion’ (Hewison 2006). For 2011/12 the Culture budget in Scotland was £154.6 million out of a total budget of approximately £33.8 billion, or .000045%.

Festivals have always had social and cultural significance and their origins can be traced back to ancient rituals celebrating spiritual or communal identity, often combined with excess and with subversion of accepted norms (Gold 2005; Friedrich 2000; Segal 2009). In the long history of festivals, the roles they have played have evolved from antique celebrations into major events to which a variety of economic and political expectations are attached (Austissier 2009). This research project has focused on how the role of festivals is shifting again in the twenty-first century on account of specific changes in the economic, competitive and policy landscape. The key forces for change have been ‘festivalisation’ and new thinking on the part of policy-makers in relation to the instrumental role festivals can play in delivering economic and social policy agendas.

The key findings of this project suggest that festivals have adjusted their sense of mission and their operations in recognition of the new pressures and demands brought on by festivalisation and by the need to satisfy an increasingly complex array of agendas on the part of funders and policy-makers. As the role of festivals has become recast with greater emphasis on more professionalised delivery and adherence to public policy agendas, the findings of this research suggest that many of the changes recently adopted can be viewed as positive and advantageous for festival organisations and audiences.

A more professional approach to marketing and communications activities has enabled festivals such as the EIF not only to increase their audiences and ticket sales income but also to widen and extend their audience reach, thereby achieving higher participation in the arts with associated positive socio-cultural outcomes. The experience of the EIF confirms the findings of earlier theoretical work on marketing in the cultural sector by Colbert (2011) and others which suggests that the deployment of the tools of marketing can help fulfil an organisation’s cultural agenda and need not be accompanied by a more market-driven or consumerist approach. A pervasive change in the culture of festival organisations such as the EIF through branding exercises has resulted in improved awareness amongst staff at all levels of the purpose and sense of identity of the organisation they are working for. Therefore a re-structuring of the EIF to direct greater attention and resource

to marketing and management of internal and external brand image has resulted in what management and funders recognize as beneficial improvements in performance.

A shift towards greater reliance on partnerships over the last decade has also resulted in beneficial outcomes for the EIF. Most notably, the way in which the EIF has worked with local partners - many of them festivals, such as the Fringe, that previously were regarded as rivals - to build Edinburgh's profile as the Festival City has created a new and successful model of interaction and partnership between cultural organisations and stakeholders which, this thesis would argue, offers valuable lessons for prospective 'festival cities' or 'festival regions' elsewhere around the world. The evidence of interviews and observation is that the EIF has been a key player in developing this cultural policy and has undertaken this role as a matter of expediency, viewing it as better to lead and to bring its own artistic ethos to the performance of new roles. EIF staff consciously aim to bring the qualities of originality and innovation expressed in the arts programme to their work in all spheres and in this spirit the EIF has engaged with building new models of cultural practice, in particular demonstrating that effective and strategic use of partnerships enables festivals to make more cost-effective use of their resources and offers a source of significant potential advantage over competitors.

However, the changes brought by festivalisation and by increasingly instrumentalist and economistic approaches towards public support for festivals have also created grounds for concern. The constant re-invention involved in festival programming, a core activity for the management of festival organisations, is a creative activity and not readily prone to the automation or streamlining of more commercial operations. While this critical concern may be ameliorated by the fact that improved marketing and better use of partnerships can generate additional income and cost-efficiencies which could make these strategies self-supporting, without additional resources to support investment in more professionalised marketing and in the management of partnerships, it may be argued that a re-direction of resources and management energies away from other activities to enable this

strategy could eventually prove damaging to a festival's ability to sustain its core artistic functions.

Similarly, the increasing emphasis on the importance of the term 'partnership' to characterise the strategic development of relationships with a range of organizations, particularly funders and business sponsors, can mask an inequality underlying these relationships in which the balance of power lies with political and business sectors whose priorities are not culture, particularly not the more esoteric and transgressive aspects of the arts. Interviews revealed that there were tensions between the ethos of the EIF, which is to avoid the exploitation of artists to sell shows, while under pressure to provide the 'can't buy' experiences that sponsors increasingly expect. It was also increasingly challenging for the sponsorship department to persuade corporates, often no longer based in Edinburgh, of the relevance of engaging with the city and with Scotland. The Head of Sponsorship was aware of risks to the integrity and ambition of the programme and indicated the difficulties of achieving sponsorship for the 'art' when businesses would prefer to put resources into more education oriented initiatives which look good on their Annual Reports. Interviews and press coverage also established that reliance on funding partnerships with governments abroad had the potential to jeopardize the balance and integrity of the artistic programme. The EIF has reached a point where the marketing and sponsorship departments have ballooned and require an increasing percentage of decreasing resources to respond to new government agendas, the much more specific marketing requirements of global corporations and the delicate negotiations required to develop giving relationships with individuals who will expect ever more special access to events and artists.

The harnessing of festivals such as the EIF to work in partnership with external parties and to adhere to an increasing and complex range of expectations in relation to delivery of their political agendas therefore raises important questions about the ability of arts organizations to maintain the integrity of their programming and to fully prioritise and pursue their own artistic agendas, particularly if their mission is to promote unfamiliar and ambitious work.

The recent boom in international arts festivals has been contemporaneous with a strong development of critical theory on cultural and creative industries. The discovery that the EIF is subject to an increasingly diverse array of expectations on the part of Government fits very comfortably with and confirms the work of theorists who have charted how the idea that creative and cultural industries can act as a spur to wider economic growth has served to re-shape cultural policy agendas (Hesmondhalgh 2008; Pratt 2005; O'Connor 2002).

This research has shown how, mindful of its relations with government and other funders, the EIF has tended, in practice, to embrace as opportunities the requirements to work in partnership with external bodies and to pursue a burgeoning array of socio-cultural, political and economic functions. However, the ability of arts organisations such as the EIF to deliver the sort of outcomes envisaged in, at times vacuous, creative industries rhetoric on the part of government is open to doubt. It is notable how the process of festivalisation, particularly the European programme of Capitals and Cities of Culture, has engendering a burgeoning industry of impact evaluation (Myerscough 1991, 2011; Garcia 2003, 2008) which has inspired a considerable body of work critical of both concept and methodology and which suggests that instrumental arguments for funding culture risk undermining arguments for funding art on its own terms (Snowball, Seaman and Frey 2011). Despite this, impact evaluation continues to thrive and develop as a potent tool for cultural policy makers.

More fundamentally, it is questionable whether public support for arts festivals which is predicated on encouraging pursuit of a range of non-artistic objectives, such as bolstering international relations and foreign trade and boosting tourism, amounts to a coherent and effective cultural policy. As previous critics have argued in relation to funding the arts in Scotland:

Artistic endeavour should not be treated as some sectoral component of GDP to be judged on its employment-creating merits. If that is the yardstick for investment in the arts, one might as well send out the Scottish Arts Council to dig the roads. (Jamieson, in Peacock 2001: 8)

This thesis concludes that many of the ways festival organisations such as the EIF are responding to festivalisation can be seen as conducive to improved and more professional performance of their evolving missions with some beneficial impacts. In particular, the model of co-opetition fostered in Edinburgh and its success in branding the Scottish capital as a Festival City, and creating the Festival Forum and Festivals Edinburgh as new strategic support organizations, represents a unique example of forward-thinking good practice from which cultural sectors in other countries and regions could take a lesson. Therefore, this study has generated a potentially useful contribution to literature on strategic management in the cultural sector.

However, the Festival City concept is essentially a marketing initiative and Festivals Edinburgh was established to promote and market the festivals, not to assert their value as art. The thesis would argue that it is questionable whether a cultural policy that directs festivals to prioritise non-artistic public policy goals will, in the end, support rather than undermine the cultural enrichment and engagement functions which are the historical legacy of festivals and have long ensured their popularity. This thesis therefore supports earlier theorising which is critical of the ways that cultural policy has been pervaded by concerns related to fostering wealth creation, particularly since the rise of creative industries thinking in the twenty-first century.

8.3 Limitations and future directions for research

Thanks to the collaborative nature of AHRC CDA projects, this case study research benefited greatly from the opportunity to study the EIF at close quarters and over extended time. As a long-established and successful international arts festival, with relatively stable funding, the EIF provided a very useful case study enabling analysis of organisational practice on the part of a leading player in the sector. However, the conclusion of the project indicated that there were some limitations to the knowledge I could obtain and a number of directions for future research.

The depth of this case study research was intended to maximize the potential for creation of knowledge that deepens understanding of how changing environmental

pressures in the twenty-first century are impacting on international arts festivals and, also, that can guide and inform current practice in relation to marketing, management of new communication technologies, and development of partnerships in the festival sector. However, it must be acknowledged that the use of just one setting and one organisation imposes limitations when it comes to attempting to make generalisations based on case study research (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007).

The Scottish dimension also makes this case study in some ways ‘special’ since it was conducted during a time of rapid cultural change in Scotland as the political success of the SNP, with its expected focus on Scottish identity and nationhood, coincided with the Labour/Liberal Democrat led political redesign of the administration of culture in Scotland culminating in the establishment of Creative Scotland in 2010. This cultural re-organization was radical since the new body is responsible for supporting contemporary arts, publishing, film and broadcasting and thus embodies the creative industries concept of ‘pushing together’ culture and business in a policy direction which swept away the established cultural priorities of SAC. The new organisation’s title and early website and policy statements feature more instrumental language, arguments and initiatives, with an emphasis on ‘partnership’ and it can be argued that Creative Scotland illustrates the ambitions and some of the limitations of the creative economy approach which have been discussed in this thesis.⁴²

The experience of the EIF has thus been affected by political developments which are unique to the Scottish situation and which have influenced expectations about the role a festival organisation can play in assisting government to build international relations. However, it also remains the case that the EIF has been

⁴² In its first two years it has eschewed debate on what a distinctively Scottish culture might be and alienated many artists and arts organizations working in Scotland who have organized public debates and a media campaign attacking Creative Scotland’s use of the language of business and the lack of art form expertise in decision making. Articles included a *Scotsman* piece, ‘Damaged at the heart: artists pull no punches over Creative Scotland’ (Ferguson 2012) which listed prominent Scottish artists like Liz Lochhead, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, James Kelman and Janice Galloway who had signed a public letter of protest to the Chair of Creative Scotland.

subject to a range of other competitive, economic and political pressures which appear entirely typical of the UK and international festivals sector more widely.

The design of the research project was informed by my previous experience as an arts manager, as discussed in Chapter Four, where my relationship to arts organizations was that of a funder and my role was to develop opportunities and strategic resources for artists, often operating in an exploratory and flexible way. I had seen the creative industries turn as offering new opportunities for artists and arts organizations to gain recognition of the economic and social value of their work and to achieve improved profile and resources and had initiated a Creative Industries department at SAC. I therefore had an interest in charting how the EIF was negotiating new strategic roles in order to maintain the lead in a competitive global landscape of festivalisation and to respond to new government agendas. I viewed the centrality of the programming role and its values as remaining unchanged.

However, through the more forensic exploration of the ‘field’ of the organization demanded by the research role and the development of a critical perspective on the cultural policy landscape with which I had been familiar, a concern about the programming emerged. The findings of the thesis that, in recent years, the EIF is working under increasing pressure to resource more politicized roles raised the question of whether its ability to create and promote new work, which is integral to its position as a leading international arts festival, could be compromised. While the case study established that the EIF is undertaking new roles and delivering them successfully, it was difficult to ignore the fact that, during the course of the research, the Festival Director acknowledged that he was working under what he considered quite extraordinary financial constraints in designing his programme. While media coverage and box office sales generally support the EIF’s confidence in its continuing artistic leadership (which was assumed as a given in all public discussion by staff) the institutional and policy findings of the thesis suggest that further research might test how far it is fully able to continue to prioritise and pursue its own artistic agendas. It is in the position of having to use diminishing resources to respond to a range of non-cultural demands and is not able to commission or co-produce the new work which makes the programme exclusive.

Further research would interrogate how this is sustainable without compromising the programming mission.

Some of the research carried out for this thesis has also pointed towards broader areas where further work is needed in order to explore in greater depth the ways in which the role of international art festivals is changing and the wider implications of these changes. A larger survey of a number of international arts festivals would strengthen and enrich findings about how the areas of activity placed under scrutiny in this study - communications and marketing; the growing importance of partnerships; and negotiation and management of evolving government agendas - have been affected by festivalisation and by the need to satisfy an increasingly complex array of demands on the part of funders and policy-makers in the twenty-first century. Further research based on a larger number of festivals would help to establish to what extent the achievements of the EIF in relation to, for example, professionalisation of its use of social media in communications or in relation to more effective and judicious use of partnerships, provide useful examples of best professional practice in the field of arts festival management.

One area which is particularly deserving of additional empirical research and theory-building work relates to the model of cultural partnership surrounding the establishment of Edinburgh as a Festival City. The thesis has identified this development as unique and potentially significant in terms of guiding future approaches in the cultural sector to collective image building and city branding, although it is acknowledged that the Festivals Edinburgh model exhibits a delicate balancing of interests which is not necessarily immediately exportable. Faith Liddell, Chief Executive of Festivals Edinburgh, noted that, although she has been asked to run seminars on working collaboratively by Scottish Enterprise and tourism agencies in Edinburgh, she has also found, on a visit to Ireland to talk to arts festivals there about partnership working, that ‘they said they weren’t grown up enough, not ready to stop competing’. However, given the evident success and the benefits of this model of co-opetition in the context of Edinburgh, further research would be beneficial to find out why local circumstances allowed partnership to

flourish in the Scottish capital and how far this experience is exportable to the festival sector elsewhere or indeed to organisations in other sectors.

The thesis has established that consultants have played a powerful role in shaping the Edinburgh model and research might explore the longer term implications of this. Previous chapters have discussed how the strategy papers and impact studies commissioned in Edinburgh have been effective in leveraging funding from CEC and influenced the language and direction of cultural policy in Edinburgh and Scotland. Further research might investigate the implications of adopting the language and assumptions of business models propagated by impact studies which have become enshrined in the policy, strategies and working practices of the cultural sector in the UK and Scotland, as illustrated by the EIF case study. Since consultants are commissioned to advise on achieving established policy goals and negotiating given conditions, research might interrogate how the validity of those goals is tested or how the impact of satisfying them on the cultural mission of the arts organizations is quantified. The limitations of impact studies and the risk that their use of instrumental arguments to justify ‘investment’ in the arts obscures and undermines the value which might be attributed to the arts and culture in and of themselves has been discussed in previous chapters. Further research would investigate the effectiveness of cultural policies built in this way in managing artists and arts organisations who understand culture as a process of exploring human identity and meaning through aesthetic experience, celebration and creative play rather than as a way of topping up the economy.

Research might also explore why, although Impact studies such as those discussed (SQW 2004; BOP 2011) focus on the economic importance of the Edinburgh festivals to the city and to Scotland they have failed to win substantial new funding for culture either for the EIF and the other festivals, or at local or national departmental levels. Nor, in spite of the emphasis on partnership and collaboration, do significant new partnerships appear to have emerged between culture and larger, better resourced departments to whose work art and culture manifestly contribute (Enterprise, Education, Health) although this has been advocated in Scottish government rhetoric. The EIF, a leading player globally, is still funded through a modest local council Culture and Sports budget.

A broader challenge for future research to contribute to improved design for cultural policy would be by testing empirically the extent to which prevailing perceptions that festivals and arts organisations can contribute to a range of non-artistic public policy objectives, as well as performing their cultural functions effectively, are well-founded. While the BOP 2011 Survey proposed some longer-term ways of measuring the socio-cultural functions which the festivals deliver and recommended that the festivals use these as tool kits for themselves, the deficiencies of existing short term techniques for measuring impact in the cultural sectors were acknowledged in the report and are well noted. More research would call for continued improvement in the tools available to cultural providers for impact evaluation since these studies are increasingly influential in cultural policy formulation. Future research might also compare cultural policy models in Europe and Scandinavia, where culture is funded as an aspect of Education, with Scotland and the UK, where the language and assumptions of business models propagated by impact studies are increasingly adopted as cultural policy.

The eminent Scottish poet, Don Paterson, proposed a cultural policy for Scotland, which was published in 2005 in the report of the Cultural Commission (2005). In this poem (full text in Appendix B) he refers to ‘treasuring’ the ‘common wealth’ of Scotland’s culture as ‘the only engine of its living hour’. The evidence presented in this thesis suggests that the development of cultural policy based on instrumental evaluations of arts and culture, as exemplified by the First Minister’s 2003 St Andrews Day Speech, offers limitations as well as opportunities for artists and arts organizations. Without the input of the artists, who are the experts in the field, it fails to value the richness, ‘wild invention’ and ‘thousand, thousand songs’ (Paterson 2005) which are the work of artists and the gift of international arts festivals.

ORIGINAL RESEARCH AND ARCHIVAL SOURCES

1. Interviews carried out in Edinburgh between March 2009 and May 2012

Joanna Baker, Managing Director and non-academic supervisor. Regular discussions rather than formal interviews took place on: 5 March 2009, 17 July 2009, 8 December 2009, 14 January 2010, 22 April 2010, 8 June 2010, 1 November 2010, 18 November 2010, 10 February 2011, 8 June 2011, 11 October 2011, 13 January 2012, 15 May 2012.

Susie Burnett, Media Relations Manager, 21 January 2010.

Anita Clark, Lead Officer for EIF at SAC and Creative Scotland, 4 May 2010.

Sheila Colvin, Associate Director of EIF 1985-89, 10 October 2009.

Nikki Furley, Head of Sponsorship and Development, 22 January 2010.

Derek Gilchrist, Marketing Manager, 14 January 2010.

Lynne Halfpenny, Head of Culture and Sport, CEC, 29 June 2010.

Sally Hobson, Head of Programme Development, 22 January 2010.

Jill Jones, Artists Manager, 15 January 2010.

Faith Liddell, Chief Executive, Festivals Edinburgh, 14 July 2010.

Gordon McLachlan, Friend of EIF, 2 February 2011.

Brian McMaster, Festival Director 1992-2006, 15 November 2011.

Jonathan Mills, Festival Director 2006 - 2014, 23 September 2009, 3 February 2010, 22 June 2011.

Alison Riach, Planning and Operations Director, 21 January 2010.

John Robb and Stephen Bremner, Head of Technical and Technical Administrator, 19 January 2010.

Donald Smith, Director, Scottish Storytelling Centre and Festival, 9 December 2011.

Matthew Studdert Kennedy, Artistic Administrator, 22 January 2010.

Jackie Westbrook, Director of Marketing and Communications, 15 January 2010.

Christopher Wynn, Director of Sponsorship and Development, 14 January 2010, 22 June 2011.

Staff meetings and other internal EIF meetings

Informal EIF Staff Meetings: 30 October 2009, 8 December 2009, 4 February 2010, 10 March 2010, 20 April 2010, 15 June 2010, 15 July 2010, 6 December 2010, 4 February 2011, 11 March 2011, 11 October 2011.

Staff Away Day: 12 October 2011.

Listening Workshop: 27 May 2010.

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APPENDIX A - Developing a policy on archives.

Context

This brief discussion paper is based on my experience as a researcher seeking original source material on the EIF and is written in response to discussions with Joanna Baker, Managing Director of the Edinburgh International Festival (EIF). As I started to work on the project I realised that the EIF has already amassed, and continues to generate, a volume of important original material which documents its on-going history as a leading international arts festival. This material tells the story of the exceptional artistic and cultural impact of the EIF and of the work created by international artists brought to Edinburgh by the EIF, often through new commissions and co-productions. From official records and papers the researcher can also infer the contribution which the Festival has made to transforming the city of Edinburgh, enriching the cultural life of Scotland and developing its profile internationally.

The EIF itself holds a store of this material which includes a collection of rare recordings of unique performances, original manuscripts and musical scores relating to the Festival Chorus and original programmes and press photographs as well as press cuttings and a growing range of online content. The EIF makes regular deposits of original material to the National Library of Scotland (NLS). There is also material relating to the EIF held at the Edinburgh City Archives and in the Edinburgh Room at the Edinburgh Central Library. These are valuable resources which are of interest to artists and audiences past and present, and to the general public.

This archival evidence is also important to other international festivals and to policy makers as it documents the contribution of the EIF and the other Edinburgh festivals to the development and formulation of cultural policy in Edinburgh, to the creative economy of Scotland and the growing importance of cultural organisations, particularly festivals, as ambassadors representing Scotland and the UK internationally. These roles are of increasing interest to academic researchers and to cultural policy makers exploring what elements have stimulated the

flourishing of twelve international festivals in one city, and what they have contributed to Edinburgh and to Scotland as well as their artistic importance internationally. The official documents, reviews, consultants' reports, and minutes of the local authority, the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB), the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) and the Edinburgh Festival Society (EFS) provide a narrative of how the importance of the festivals has grown. Currently, delegations of artists, policy makers and politicians come to the EIF to gain first hand experience of the festivals in Edinburgh in August and, while these contacts with politicians and policy makers are increasingly important to the EIF, to the city and to the Scottish Government, it would also be of benefit if this archival material were available to artists, scholars and policy makers internationally who are not able to come in person.

However the reality for the researcher in 2012, is that it is difficult to get a coherent sense of the extent of the archival material available and how to access it. Important archives are currently held in several institutions in Edinburgh, including the EIF, but there is no complete account of what is available, and where it is, and no jointly agreed policy between the EIF and these institutions on storage and accession. In the NLS and the Edinburgh City Archives the indexing and analysis of EIF material is relatively underdeveloped due to lack of resources. An addendum at the end of this paper, informed by a meeting on 18 June 2012, with Sally Harrower, Curator of Modern (post 1850) Scottish Literature and Theatre Studies, who is responsible for the Special Manuscripts Collection of EIF archives at the NLS, gives more detail on what is held at the NLS and indicates the kind of resources held at the City Archives and Edinburgh Central Library.

At the EIF itself, decisions about what archival material should be kept and what could be discarded, the development of systematic indexing and storage and the question of where and how material could best be accessed, while a matter of concern, have not been a priority for the organisation since there are no dedicated resources for the purpose. However there is a growing imperative to provide improved public access to information which means that developing a policy on archiving and an efficient system to retrieve material has become more important. Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation has raised issues about what should be in the public domain and what should not. The Trustees of the EIF have an obligation

to ensure that, as a publicly funded organisation, the EIF is able to comply with the letter of the law and to consider other issues of public accountability which arise as matters of principle. For instance, should the Minutes of the Edinburgh Festival Society or of the Festival Council be publicly available, or should access depend on the EIF's formal liability to FOI requests? Should artists' contracts, details of which could be considered private, be publicly available, as some currently are at the NLS, or should these be documents which the EIF retains as it needs to? Sally Harrower indicated that, while the NLS is interested in collecting material of artistic and strategic cultural interest, like the Minutes of the Edinburgh Festival Society (EFS), she viewed it as a matter for the EIF to decide how they wish to keep a record of what could be considered personnel information.

In a discussion on 13 January 2012, Joanna Baker noted that the EIF had made a bid to Creative Scotland for £100,000 to digitise its archives and that this had activated a renewed sense of the importance of developing policy on archives and of the part that digital and social media platforms could play in enhancing the public's understanding and enjoyment of the Festival's current operation and of its unique history. The bid focused on the Festival's already developed experience of using digital and social media communications creatively and, although unsuccessful at the time, it offered a vision of how a combination of the skills of a dedicated archivist and the innovative use of digital technology could make archival material accessible to the public and to artists and researchers in new ways. This paper is therefore an attempt to lay out what might be thought about in developing a policy on how to manage and to make available this unique archival material.

Development of policy

How should an EIF policy on archives be defined? The EIF's mission statement is that it should be 'the most exciting, innovative and accessible Festival of the performing arts in the world, and thus promote the cultural, educational and economic well-being of the people of Edinburgh and Scotland' (EIF Business Plan 2009-2012:3). A policy on archives could have *accessibility* and *cultural* and *educational* values at its core and could take *innovation* as its inspiration for developing new ways of operating. The EIF has also demonstrated an increasing

ability to develop and maintain strategic partnerships and a successful archive policy would need to build relationships with existing institutions holding archive collections, to seek new partners with common interests in developing projects and to work in collaboration with the other Edinburgh festivals.

Once a policy is defined and agreed, a first practical step would be to map the existing archives and provide as complete a list as possible of what material relating to the EIF has been collected, where it is held and how it can be accessed. A basic map of the main holdings would include what is held at the EIF itself, at the NLS, at Edinburgh Central Library and at Edinburgh City Archives. Bartie's thesis (2006:269-278) also notes other holdings which refer to the EIF at the National Archives of Scotland, the Traverse Club Archives, the Scottish Theatre Archives, University of Glasgow Special Collection and the Gallagher Memorial Library, Caledonian University Library Special Collections. She also refers to material relating to the Edinburgh Festival and the Scottish Committee held at the Victoria and Albert Museum in the correspondence of the Secretariat of the Arts Council for the period 1945 to 1961 (Bartie 2006:49). Further research is needed to analyse in detail what unique material each collection holds and how to access it and also to ascertain whether there are significant collections of material held elsewhere.

There are already some consistent collections of material, e.g. a full set of the original Minutes of the EFS is held at the EIF and there are chronologically stored sets of press cuttings kept in Edinburgh Central Library as well as those which the EIF have deposited at the NLS. Other sets of relevant committee minutes will be kept at partner institutions like SAC/Creative Scotland and the City of Edinburgh Council. A mapping exercise would aim to: establish exactly what relevant material the EIF, the NLS, Edinburgh Central Library and Edinburgh City Archives hold; to identify the unique material in each collection which cannot be found elsewhere and to describe the material which is held in other collections.

Currently it is difficult for a researcher to access a complete collection of specific kinds of items, such as programmes or photographs or correspondence, or to research particular art forms, for instance, opera, or to find all the material on particular artists or companies. The current system is that the EIF makes sporadic

deposits of material to the NLS, which puts it in storage and indexes it over time, but there is no agreed system on exactly what should be kept and how it should be deposited. The EIF generates a mass of original documentation each year and this is put in boxes and stored in premises at Granton until a large enough volume prompts a deposit to the NLS. Sally Harrower indicated that the NLS would currently find it easiest to deal with fewer, larger, better indexed deposits.

There are other practical problems which would need to be considered and solved if material is to be more publicly available. For instance, the EIF has collected valuable and rare items such as audio recordings by the BBC, and video recordings of all performances, made by the technical team over the years for their own use. While these offer fascinating and unique material for artists and researchers, allowing more public access would raise the question of whether and how artists and performers who feature in these recordings should be paid for their work. A further important resource which requires a practical solution is how to manage and maintain a database of performances, derived from the programmes over the last 15 years, which Joanna Baker explained that the EIF has built through input by students. In the same way that Miller's *The Edinburgh International Festival 1947 - 1996*.(1996) has become a valuable resource for researchers, as it gives complete information on all the programmes and all the artists who appeared at the Festival up to that point, the EIF's database also represents a valuable resource which should be on-going. There would be benefits if the EIF could continue building it and make it available internationally, either within the EIF or through exploring the potential for situating it in another institution which could maintain and manage it.

Ways forward

How is a coherent and accessible EIF Archive to be achieved on limited resources? A strategy might be for the EIF to take the lead in developing a creative partnership with the institutions already holding the existing collections with the aim of enhancing the collections, improving access, offering a better service to the public and making joint applications for additional funding to assist with the indexing, cataloguing and management of the material. Sally Harrower noted that the NLS Special Collections already has understandings with Edinburgh City Library

and Edinburgh City Archives on where it is appropriate for deposits to be placed and that she would be happy to work with institutions holding other collections. She also indicated that the NLS has a Development_ Team which advises on how to apply for funding for particular projects and that she and the recently appointed Digital Archivist at the NLS would be happy to meet with the EIF to discuss ways forward.

Discussion with the NLS could include: the potential for developing new projects in partnerships with other institutions, including digital projects; the use of both NLS and EIF volunteers to develop an improved system of indexing and cataloguing material currently held by the NLS; the sifting, analysis and indexing of the EIF archival material currently held at Granton and devising a system at the EIF of preparing archival material for deposit at the NLS in future. The aim would be to agree a policy as to what the EIF should, in future, retain and deposit with the NLS and to initiate a system at the EIF for indexing material and making regular deposits.

Since the public institutions which currently hold most of the archival material relating to the EIF have little capacity to do more than indexing the holdings they have, it would also make sense for the EIF to seek new partnerships. For instance, an academic institution like the University of Glasgow, already holds collections of relevant material on Theatre History, and also has a Centre for Creativity, Regulation and Intellectual Property Rights which might offer expertise on accessing resources for new projects. Joanna Baker has already discussed the potential of the EIF interacting with other cultural organisations operating in the creative industries to work with this new Centre and to develop joint projects and these ideas should be pursued.

Festivals Edinburgh is also working, through its Innovation Lab, with the Infomatics Department at the University of Edinburgh and it may be possible to develop projects with them to put material from the EIF and the other Edinburgh festivals on line in innovative ways. Other approaches might be made to Napier University, where Jonathan Mills is an honorary Professor, and there is an interest in developing work on creative industries, or Queen Margaret University which has a

cultural policy department. Caledonian University in Glasgow might also be interested in developing its existing special collection and discussions could be initiated with Professor Gayle McPherson whose area of expertise includes cultural policy and festivals, to explore whether there is potential for further joint research and developing the collections on the Edinburgh festivals. An arts institute, Summerhall, which opened in Edinburgh in 2011, also has an interest in animating archival material about the Edinburgh festivals and has given a home to the important De Marco archive. Through partnerships and sharing the expertise of universities, of the NLS and of the other Edinburgh festivals, there may be possibilities for the EIF to develop research initiatives such as Knowledge Exchange projects to convert and exploit archival material digitally. The aim of new partnerships would be to create joint resources in terms of research personnel and funding, which would enable more detailed analysis of EIF archival material in existing collections, and achieve research projects which would put the EIF archive in the public domain in new and innovative ways.

Moving forward would have resource implications for the EIF. From an external point of view the EIF would need to delegate a member of staff with the appropriate skills to develop relationships with the institutions currently holding the collections, to form new relationships and to develop joint strategy with them on how to create improved visibility and accessibility, including the preparation of applications for funding. Within the EIF some specialist expertise would need to be acquired so that a system for developing and managing the consistent collection of designated material and depositing it in appropriate external collections could be set in place.

Addendum

National Library of Scotland (NLS)

The NLS exists to advance universal access to knowledge about Scotland and in Scotland. It holds material about the EIF both in its Printed Collections and in its Manuscript Collections. It has an active policy of acquisition; for instance Manuscript Collections has acquired three important collections of photographs

relating to the EIF, (Paul Shillabeer, Sean Hudson and Alan Daiches), which are currently held in the form of negatives and therefore not very readily accessible to researchers. Manuscripts Collections also accepts deposits, primarily from the EIF, but also from individuals who donate items which may be collections of programmes or collections of correspondence with key figures.

Manuscripts Collections has a policy of cataloguing accessions but are only able to list deposits to file level due to lack of resources. There are currently eight sections of material on the EIF, six of which have been listed under the headings Acc 10572, Acc 11518, Acc 11779, Acc 12075, Acc 12169 and Dep. 378 and this information is available online. Acc 12252 and Acc 12269, which were deposited by the EIFS in 2004, have not yet been listed. The actual archival material is stored on site at the NLS and can be accessed on request and is generally produced within an hour.

Sally Harrower was kind enough to give me a tour of the rooms where the EIF Manuscript Collection is held. It is stored in boxes and files which are placed on shelves when the material is deposited chronologically, so EIF deposits are therefore interspersed with all the other archival material which NLS acquires. This means that archival material relating to the EIF is stored in several different places in a labyrinth of shelving corridors and rooms rather than being held all in one place. Sally Harrower does not see this as a particular problem as there is currently no public access to the stack floors: collection material is taken by staff to the Reading Rooms for researcher consultation.

There is much more of it than I expected. For instance, Acc 11779 has 189 boxes, which contain a variety of different types of documentation. The earliest deposit, Dep 378, has 498 files, many of which sound intriguing, e.g. 'Music scores by Stockhausen and Certha' plus four movie reels marked 'Chief Enhard' (item 58), or the original script of 'The Hidden King' by Jonathan Griffin with its licence from the Lord Chamberlain and a revised script for performance in the Assembly Hall plus the MS of the musical score and the orchestral parts (item 60). This deposit also includes programmes and green books of the EIF's outgoing correspondence from 1947 on (but no incoming letters), and a number of original printing blocks

and plates. Acc 10752 is labelled Edinburgh Film Society and contains EFS Committee Minutes and correspondence from 1972 - 1981 and some unlisted boxes and files. Acc 11518 contains press cuttings and scrapbooks from 1967 - 1973, Acc 11779 is 62 boxes of artists' contracts, press cutting, programmes and brochures from 1983 - 1995. Acc 12075 contains photographs and slides from 1992-1998 and Acc 12169 contains press cuttings from 1994 - 1999. Because there is such a wealth of material here, there is a tremendous amount of work to be done to create a detailed picture of what is currently a treasure trove which remains, to a large extent, uncharted.

City of Edinburgh Archives

While the City Archivist is extremely helpful much of the material which relates to the EIF is in boxes and files of full Edinburgh Council Minutes and Recreation Council Minutes. While these are probably not collected elsewhere they are not organised so that it is easy to find references to the EIF. There are also a number of boxes which are specifically labelled as EIF material: Edinburgh Festival, referenced 2744 - 2749, Edinburgh Festival Society, referenced 6737 and 7864 - 7871, Edinburgh Festival of music and drama referenced 7225 - 7230 and Edinburgh International Festival, referenced 7967 and 7968. These boxes of files are chiefly minutes of a number of relevant committee meetings with attachments which include details of contracts with artists, items of publicity, correspondence relating to grants and letters and petitions received from the public in response to controversial programming at the festival. The chronology is intermittent and some of the material may well be collected elsewhere; for instance an account of a meeting on 16-17 January 1950 between representatives of the Salzburg, Holland and Edinburgh festivals where administrative problems, publicity and 'artistic questions' were discussed (6737 Box 1950). While this is an interesting document it is also likely to be held in files kept by the Edinburgh Festival Society. As with the NLS, there is a lot of useful material here, some of it unique, but without a map of what is there and more detailed indexing of the holdings, researching is currently labour intensive.

The Edinburgh Room at Edinburgh Central Library

The Edinburgh Room holds a range of materials which relate to the EIF, much of it cuttings from press and journals such as collections by individuals such as 'Edinburgh Notes' - a collection of press cuttings made by Elizabeth Mein 1944-1964 (YDA1818 Acc. C71153), reports such as 'Report on the advantages of the Festival to Edinburgh 1956' by the Scottish Tourist Board (qYML 38E Acc B15920) and the submission on behalf of the Edinburgh Festival Society for the Nobel Peace Prize, January 1952 (qYMV38E Acc. C7270. Material requested at the desk was produced within 20 minutes. There is also a collection of relevant books such as the Edinburgh Festival Society's publication *Edinburgh Festival: A Review of the First Ten Years of the Edinburgh International Festival, Its Aims and Its Origins, Its Achievements and Its Hopes for the Future.* (1956), (YML38E. Acc 840591501).

Appendix B

We, the Scottish people, undertake

To find within our culture the true measure
Of the mind's vitality and spirit's health;
To see that what is best in us is treasured,
And what is treasured, held as common wealth;

To guarantee all Scots folk, of whatever
Age or origin, estate or creed,
The means and the occasion to discover
Their skill or gift, and let it flower and seed;

To act as democratic overseer
Of our whole culture: wise conservator
Of its tradition, its future's engineer,
The only engine of its living hour;

To take just pride in all our diverse tongues,
Folks and customs, and also what is yet
Distinct in us: our thousand thousand songs
Our wild invention and our thraven debate;

To honour our best artists, and respect
Not just the plain cost of their undertaking

But the worth of what they make, and every act
Of service and midwifery to that making;

And to discover, through our artistry
And fine appreciation of our art,
What we are not - so know ourselves to be
The whole world, both in microcosm and part,

And recognise in this our charge of care
To friend and stranger, bird and beast and tree,
The planetary and local space we share,
We will do this wakefully, and imaginatively.

(Don Paterson 2005)