

Promoting Cultural Diversity, Cultural Equality and Cultural Sustainability Through Art Centers—A Case Study of National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts Weiwuying

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This research is aimed to investigate the venues and influences of how arts centers can help promote culture diversity, equality and sustainability in cities. By analyzing the newly established National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts Weiwuying in Taiwan, it is my goal to bring out the objectives of practical approaches, of how arts center embedded cultural diversity and cultural equality through its design, organization and governance system, to connect city governance with cultural policy. In addition, relating to cultural policy and city governance by cross-examine interaction between them, this research endeavors to conceptualize the meanings and significance behind those changes in a city. Last, in terms of cultural sustainability, it will be our main goal to recognize the link which leads cultural diversity and equality to cultural sustainability development of the city.

Keywords: cultural diversity, cultural equality, culture sustainability, city governance, arts center

The History and Presence of WWY Arts Center

On October 13, 2018, The National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts Weiwuying (short for WWY arts center) was open in the Fongshan district of Kaohsiung city, the second largest city located in southern Taiwan. The birth of the WWY arts center signified three meanings: (1) the old, deserted, and isolated military space of Kaohsiung city being reconstructed and rebuilt into a place for world-class performing arts with concepts of liberty, humanity, and aesthetic values; (2) the completion of a well-balanced cultural facility map of Taiwan, with one international arts center in each of the north, middle, and south administrative district of Taiwan¹; and (3) the synchronization of art/culture development with the quality of urban life, transforming Kaohsiung city into the next new chapter.

The History of Weiwuying as a Heavy-Guarded Military Base

Weiwuying (literally means the weapon-guarded tent), before its graceful transformation into a metropolitan park and national arts center, was a military base heavily guarded and prohibited of access. At the end of the Ching Dynasty (1612-1912), it was labeled on the map of Taiwan as a place guarded by three hundred soldiers, which showed the importance of its military function; and later during the Japanese Occupation (1895-1945), it was used as storage facility for military supplies and training place for soldiers

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¹ There are three international performing art facilities under the Ministry of Culture, which are the National Concert and Theater Hall in Taipei, the National Taichung Theater, and the National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts Weiwuying.

which was called “The Storage of Fongshan”². By 1945, when the Taiwanese (The Republic of China) government gained the sovereign reign in Taiwan, Weiwuying was still used as military training center and supply storage space. It was not until 1979, when the Ministry of National Defense decided to release Weiwuying from its military duty due to its location in the heart of increasingly growing metropolitan area, the Weiwuying military base was discharged of its military personnel and facilities, and from then on became an empty and deserted place.

The Transition of Weiwuying

The usage of Weiwuying after its discharge from the military duty, considering its vast space and forest, drew attentions in many aspects of the city development. In 1981, the central government reached an agreement with the Kaohsiung city government, on which the Kaohsiung city government will receive budgets from the Ministry of Defense to lead the future development of Weiwuying. In 1986, while the Ministry of National Defense proposed turning Weiwuying into a commercial/residential community with capacity of housing 24,000 people³, the Mayor Su Nan-Cheng of Kaohsiung city at that time suggested a university town instead⁴. Then in 1992, the Ministry of National Defense proposed another plan of building Weiwuying into a military dependents’ residential community, which caused opposition from many parties in the city and substitute plans like world commercial center, shopping center, or metropolitan park⁵. The complication of Weiwuying political structure and the diverse opinions of its future caused the attention of the “Weiwuying Association for Advancement Metropolitan Park”⁶, which later on initiated several proposals and lobbying⁷, and eventually led to the “Establishment of Weiwuying University or Park ” public hearing in March 1992⁸. After the public hearing and many years of debates and coordination between different parties, the City Committee of the Ministry of the Interior approved the project “Metropolitan Park” of city development in January 2003, which contains building of a metropolitan park, culture facilities, and a commercial district⁹. With the confirmation of the transformation plan from both central and municipal government, the new identity and destiny of Weiwuying was finally set for the future.

The Presence of Weiwuying as a Graceful Center for the Arts and Culture

When the Weiwuying development project was confirmed in 2003, it happened to fit into the “New Culture Development” project proposed by the Ministry of Culture as part of the central government “Ten New Construction” plans at that time. This project was to establish an international arts and culture center for each of

² Fongshan District Second Household Registration Office, Kaohsiung City, <https://fongshan2-house.kcg.gov.tw> (access on 2019/07/22).

³ The Central News Agency, “The green evolution to push down the wall of Weiwuying”, <https://www.cna.com.tw/news/firstnews/201810120192.aspx> (access on 2017/07/23).

⁴ Shu-Te Home Economics & Commercial High School, “The Jungle of the City, Weiwuying”, <http://www.shute.kh.edu.tw/~shute103/page/311-2/b1.htm> (access on 2017/07/23).

⁵ The News Lens, “Transition of Weiwuying from military center to cultural center, in 15 years through three presidency”, <https://www.thenewslens.com/article/106045> (access on 2017/07/23).

⁶ “Weiwuying Association for Advancement Metropolitan Park”, an association formed in 1992 by Dr. Tzen Guai-Hai, with the goals to promote more green land for the Kaohsiung city. The association includes members from all professionals like doctors, architects, ecological environment enthusiasts, politicians, and students.

⁷ The Central News Agency, “The green evolution to push down the wall of Weiwuying”, <https://www.cna.com.tw/news/firstnews/201810120192.aspx> (access on 2017/07/23).

⁸ Shu-Te Home Economics & Commercial High School, “The Jungle of the City, Weiwuying”, <http://www.shute.kh.edu.tw/~shute103/page/311-2/b1.htm> (access on 2017/07/23).

⁹ Shu-Te Home Economics & Commercial High School, “The Jungle of the City, Weiwuying”, <http://www.shute.kh.edu.tw/~shute103/page/311-2/b1.htm> (access on 2017/07/23).

the north, middle, and south district, with objective of both balancing the national and regional cultural development (Fang, 2003, pp. 126-127). The establishment of the WWY arts center, with its occupancy of 9.9 hectares of land, is the single biggest construction plan for an art/culture center in the past thirty years in Taiwan. In the process of building the WWY arts center, the Council for Cultural Affairs, the Executive Yuan (the former Ministry of Culture), being the direct authority of WWY arts center at that time, set up the “Weiwuying Center for the Arts Preparation Bureau” to be in charge of the hardware side of the constructions, as well as starting a plan, called “The Project for the Development of Southern Performing Art”, which contains initiations of workshops, masterclasses, performing art groups, and appreciations for art/culture, in order to complete the software part of the arts center¹⁰. The construction of WWY arts center was completed in 2017 after 11 years of building and preparation, with a floor area of 3.3 hectares sitting on a 9.9 hectares lot; it is the largest single-roof complex theater, and also the only national arts center with international-standard facility in the southern district of Taiwan, containing six various performing spaces¹¹. The WWY arts center becomes one of the three sub-organizations under the National Performing Art Center in 2018, and with its grand opening celebration on October 13, 2018, it has transformed itself into a graceful arts center with a brand-new identity, turning the art and culture development in southern Taiwan to a new page.

Relating Weiwuying Arts Center to Cultural Policy and City Governance

With the drastic political and democratic changes of Kaohsiung in 1998, there has been major improvements in culture, living quality, and environmental development due to influences from the implementation of cultural policies and changes of city management from conceptual to practical level (Lu, 2018, pp. 140-141). These improvements had motivated the city governance to put culture considerations as its center, instead of political and economic interests (Lu, 2018, p. 252). Among changes of city governance, we can see that the concepts of cultural diversity, cultural sustainability, cultural identity, and creative cultural management are being used as strategic guidance to help cultural policies to be carried out through city development. As the transformation of Weiwuying being both major cultural project of the Ministry of Culture and the city urban development department, it is nature to say that the WWY arts center is the perfect example of the collaboration between cultural policy and city governance.

Relating WWY Arts Center to Cultural Policy

The cultural policies in Taiwan after the abolishment of martial law in 1987 have changed gradually from centralized and dictating to more liberal and diverse. Among those changes, there are emphases more on issues like the local history/culture, community, revitalization of urban spaces and local cultural facilities regarding local and regional development. With focus on these cultural aspects in mind, the implementation of cultural policy into the living space of a city is achieved by drawing recognition of local identities and participation of the people into the transformation of old public space, while the government helps coordinate relating agents or departments to complete the re-usage of the space in urbanization (Lu, 2018, pp. 251-252). Besides improving the hardware and software of city spaces, activities like art festivals, art/cultural performances, and public art installations also play important roles in promoting the cultural appreciation and recognition of the city. In short,

¹⁰ The FORMOSARACE/Construction Plan for the Weiwuying National Center for the Arts of Ministry of Culture, https://formosarace.blogspot.com/2015/11/blog-post_20.html (access on 2019/07/23).

¹¹ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/About/Venues, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/architecture?lang=en> (access on 2019/07/23).

to achieve the ultimate goals of cultural policies to improve the living quality and environment of people in the city, it is of unparalleled importance that the cultural policies are carried out with the participation and recognition from both the local communities and the city governance.

The WWY arts center and its relation to cultural policies signified two aspects of meaning. The first aspect is the formation of civic recognition and public participation regarding policies on public spaces. As during the process of transformations of the Weiwuying, there are many opinions being expressed by the locals, such as more demand for green land and cultural activities. Then the formation of the local professional people called “Weiwuying Association for Advancement Metropolitan Park” proposed “The Green Revolution of the South” plan¹², which eventually initiated the establishment of the Weiwuying Metropolitan Park through public hearing, and for the first time set an example of the local community being the major actor for connecting the cultural policy with local city governance. The second aspect of meaning is the shift of power in the public space from central government to the local community. Weiwuying served as the military base for several political reigns, from the Chinese Ching Dynasty, through Japanese government till modern democratic Taiwanese government over 100 years; and even till modern day, during discussions and process of its transformation after releasing from long-term military duty, there were still political suggestions of remaining its original function economically or militarily by turning it into commercial area or military residential community. However, with the endeavors from the local community and with promotion of cultural concepts in policies and city governance, Weiwuying had turned into a place signifying opposite meaning of military, an open, liberal, and daily-culture place, with authority of the space given to the people and strengthened by the recognition of cultural right for the local residents.

Relating WWY Arts Center to City Governance

From the 1990s, the concept of “governance” had gradually disseminated to the private sector outside the government department. Kooiman observed “governance” from a traditional political point of view, with focus rather on the internal changes instead of external one, and noticed its turn from the public sphere to the private sector. This turn signifies the definition of “governance” shifting from governmental approaches to interaction and conversation between different organizations, and is taking place from nations to private sectors, which means “governance” is now in between States, markets and civic societies (Kooiman, 2003, p. 5). This coincides to the idea of which longing for a set of new order and new governance in a globalizing universal world, the existence of governance does not reply to government anymore; instead, governance apply to any systematic set of rules, with concrete objectives and approval in its forms (Rosenau, 1992, pp. 4-8).

Bearing the trend of governance and its constant changes since 1990, the transformation and the establishment of WWY arts center corresponded to such trend and signified three internal changes of the city governance in Kaohsiung. The first one is the need of governance for public spaces from within, instead of being governed from outside. This change is inspired by the cultural identity and public values given to the WWY arts center, and by the external and internal design incorporated with cultural elements from the city. The second change is the new definition of city governance given by the WWY arts center, which is a management system with awareness to public values and recognition, and with open and flexible approaches to fostering diverse cultural activities of daily life and the equal access to such diversity. The third change is the

¹² The Central News Agency, “The green evolution to push down the wall of Weiwuying”, <https://www.cna.com.tw/news/firstnews/201810120192.aspx> (access on 2017/07/25).

shift of authority power from the municipal to the public in city governance. As described in the article of *New York Times* titled, “In Taiwan, an Invitation to a Living Room for Culture”, the WWY arts center is as private and as public to every citizen of the city. And with this new openness and intimacy with public spaces, the authority or the ownership of public space had shifted from the government to the citizen of the city due to the formation of public awareness, which also changed the dynamics of city governance from single central focus to a diverse combination of cultural, economic, and civic considerations.

With the new implementation of several cultural aspects and public values into the cultural policy, and the internal changes of governance influencing management system vertically and horizontally, WWY arts center presents not only new culture public spaces, but also the collaboration between cultural policy and city governance, as well as new cultural approaches applying to public sphere. The following section will discuss how cultural diversity and cultural equality are being embedded as the new cultural approaches into city governance in managing public spaces.

Cultural Diversity, Cultural Equality and Governance

Culture diversity has become the key concern of the modern civilization at the turn of the century. In the UNESCO 2005 Convention on “The Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions”, it affirms that cultural diversity defines the fundamental characteristic of humanity, enriches the human capacities, enhances various human values, and plays a key role in sustainable development for communities, people, and nations; it also emphasizes the recognition of equal dignity of and respect of all cultures as protection and promotion of cultural diversity, and that people should have fundamental right to participate and enjoy both cultural and economic aspects of such development, as well as equal access to diversified range of cultural expressions (UNESCO, 2015). From above, we can see cultural equality is part of the realization of protecting and promoting cultural diversity. The following discussions will focus on the meanings of cultural diversity and cultural equality in the public sphere, as well as their social and political implementation in governance.

Culture Diversity and Relating Discourses

Culture diversity has its own footprints long riven into the history of humanity and civilization. However, the needs for considering culture diversity in the public sphere were not until the late 1970s, when there was the emergence of recognition of identities based on gender, race, language, ethnic background, history, and sexual orientation, which continued to challenge the legitimacy of constitutional democracies (Havel, 1995). Such emergence also gave rise to what is called, the “new global civilization”, a civilization which covers the variety of cultures, of people, of religious worlds, and of historical tradition and understands itself as a multicultural and multipolar one (Havel, 1995). Indeed, the need to acknowledge culture diversity as the essence of modern civilization and of a harmonized society is of unparalleled importance for every nation nowadays. And putting cultural diversity into practice by connecting cultural diversity with effective approaches in governance, is vital to maintain the social cohesion and a mainspring for sustainable development for communities, people, and nations. This recognition also corresponds with the firm beliefs of UNESCO that cultural diversity needs to flourish within a framework of democracy, tolerance, social justice, and mutual respect between peoples and cultures, for peace and security at the local, national, and international level. And to ensure such flourishing of cultural diversity, it needs to incorporate within a strategic framework in national and international policies, and

to reaffirm the sovereign rights of States to adopt measures and policies to protect and promote the expression of cultural diversity within their territory (UNESCO, 2015).

Being aware of the importance of cultural diversity and before connecting it with governance, we need to observe few political discourses or democratic approaches concerning multiculturalism. While some multicultural theorist proposed the practices of coexistence of varies cultural movements, such as identity/difference movement, cultural rights and multicultural citizenship movement, and that struggles for recognition should be in the same temporal and political space, other scholar like Seyla Benhabid criticized such approaches being premature normativism, by giving all-too-quick reification of given group identities, resulting in a failure to interrogate the true meaning of cultural identities and hasty policy recommendations that run the risk of freezing existing group differences (Benhabid, 2002, p. 9). Instead, Benhabid proposed a deliberative democratic model, which allows legal pluralism and institutional power-sharing through regional and local parliaments, supporting a view that cultures are constituted through contested practices (Benhabid, 2002, p. 9). And in terms of maintaining purity or distinctiveness of cultures, democratic theorists support the recognition of culture identities/difference movement to be for democratic inclusion, greater social and political justice and cultural fluidity, while Benhabid criticized such movement to be irreconcilable with both democratic and epistemological considerations of cultures and neglecting the internal complexity and essential contestability of cultures. In alternative, she proposed an approach with expansion of democratic inclusion and equality over preservation of cultural distinctiveness, and with extension of democratic dialogue by denouncing the exclusivity and hierarchy of existing cultural movements (Benhabid, 2002, p. 9). She also believes that democratic equality and deliberate practices are compatible with new cultural experimentation and legal institution that accommodate cultural pluralism (Benhabid, 2002, p. 9).

Cultural Diversity and Equality in Governance

Whether it is multiculturalist approaches of coexistence of varies cultural movements, or the deliberative democratic models of cultures constituted through contested practices, we cannot deny that cultural diversity is one of the key concepts concerning every social and political governance from regional, national to international level. And being the social and democratic reflection of cultural diversity, cultural equality acts as the fundamental human right and the path to full culture access and culture expressions. Despite the social and political nature of cultural diversity and cultural equality, we will focus more on the aspects concerning the practical approaches of implementing cultural diversity in a governance system.

By referring governance as a set of norms, standards, and social groups which shape ways of both formal and informal thinking and ways of acting, instead of a governance institution with sets of formal organizations and procedures established in and followed through specified legal practices (Healey, 2004, p. 92), we want to explore new modes of governance which takes culture creative innovations as its center, and focuses more on the value of aesthetic and spiritual qualities of urban life than the external and economic aspect of material life. Here I will analyze how cultural diversity is embedded with practical approaches through governance in three dimensions, which are actors, arenas, and settings and interactive practices using the analytical scheme of “Dimensions of Governance” adapted by Healey (Healey, 2004, p. 93). With these three dimensions highly visible to our daily life, we can examine how culture diversity is experienced and encountered through actions in daily life. In the dimension of actors, we want to identify the roles, strategies, and interests of cultural diversity; in the dimension of arenas, we want to define both tangible and intangible institutional site of cultural

diversity promotion; and last in the dimension of settings and interactive practices, we want to specify the communication and networking innovations used in the governance system, and how they help culture diversity reach out to a wider community.

Promoting Cultural Diversity and Equality Through an Art Center: Its Practical Approaches and Meanings

As the official website of the National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts Weiwuying introduces itself “Center for the Arts, Arts for the People”, it is clear that this art center emphasizes its main purpose to serve the art of the people. Located in the southern part of Taiwan, the city of Kaohsiung used to be an industrial city and the second largest industrial port, full of worker and immigrants from different origins with diverse culture and lifestyles. However, lacking cultural development and resources from the central government had been a longtime criticism of the city governance, and the city of Kaohsiung even had a title of “the culture dessert”, a sarcastic remark on its lacking culture activities. Therefore, when building the WWY arts center, as part of the city and the national major culture establishment to overcome these cultural shortcomings, its goal was to initiate more vibrant culture activities produced and provided from the local and for the local, with emphasis on the cultural diversity and equality as the key concepts of the management, ensuring that different groups of the local people have equal access to the cultural resources, and their voices are being heard and expressed. The concepts of cultural diversity and equality for the WWY arts center can be seen in these three aspects, which are space transformation and redesigning, artistic program design, and reaching out projects. In these three aspects, we will explore how practical approaches are being applied through innovative and creative programs design and organization management, showing the effort and ambition to make the WWY arts center not only a showcase for the fine arts but also a cultural space that is evolving with people’s everyday life and enriches the city’s cultural content. The meanings of putting cultural diversity and equality as the central ideas of an art center can be presented in many different levels, such as from local to international, municipal to national, community to government. The following paragraphs will present practical approaches of how cultural diversity and equality are being realized in these three aspects, also the meanings and the influences reflecting on these changes regarding city cultural life and cultural governance.

Space Transformation and Design

The culture diversity is expressed through the WWY arts center by its space transformation and design. Located on the north-east corner of the Weiwuying natural ecological metropolitan park, the WWY arts center occupied 9.9 hectare of the 47 hectare Weiwuying metropolitan park, which is the biggest metropolitan park in Taiwan. The park opened in 2010, comprising six different zones with featuring on nature/ecology, health/leisure, and arts/culture, and had become the biggest nature metropolitan park situated in the busy area of the city. This park had brought what the residents of Kaohsiung longed for a long time, a large green space signifying improvement of pollution from the city’s industrial past, and had become the pride of the city of Kaohsiung, therefore earning titles such as the “Green Lung” and the “Dream of Green” of Kaohsiung¹³. Being the latest addition to the metropolitan park, it is no doubt that WWY arts center is the main attraction and the representation of the arts/culture aspect of the park. Taking all above into account, the architect Fracine Houben

¹³ Weiwuying Metropolitan Park/Dreamland Park Zone, <https://pwbgis.kcg.gov.tw/weiwuying/weiwuying/login/Publish/upFiles/201292418113.jpg> (access on 2019/7/22).

of the WWY arts center incorporated many elements of the diverse nature of the environment, as well as the industrial and historical heritage of the city into the design of the architecture. The style of the architecture took inspiration from the surroundings with well-preserved green vegetation, creating large floating canopies signifying the local banyan tree crowns gliding to the ground, with beautiful curves blending with the nature, allowing free space access from all directions¹⁴. The exterior and the roof, by paying culture tribute to the city's root as a sea-port city, is a collaboration with the local ship-making industry, and with its wavy structure which withholds the humidity and salinity from the sea, it adapts to the local subtropical weather and environment¹⁵. From all above, we can see the WWY arts center helps promote cultural diversity by taking cultural diversity as its fundamental inspirations from the beginning, with inclusion of diverse culture elements, such as city's history, natural environment, lifestyles, and culture habits. The outer display of the architecture, as well as the inner significance of space usage and its relating lifestyle, are both presentation of the city's culture diversity, by transforming an art center into a public friendly space of easy-access art experiences, with familiar footprints from the local culture elements.

If putting cultural diversity as the key actor helps the WWY arts center achieve the ultimate goals of every culture policy, which are to improve citizens' lifestyle and living quality by enriching their culture expressions and creations, then making effort to carry out the idea of cultural equality will be the venues to put policy into governance, so as to ensure that every citizen has the equal opportunity to access such culture diversity and resources. The concept of cultural equality is realized through the outdoor space design of the WWY arts center. There are six venues of the WWY arts center, which are the Banyan Plaza, Opera House, Concert Hall, Playhouse, Recital Hall, and the Outdoor Theater. Both the Banyan Plaza and the Outdoor Theater are in the open space, created to bring people closer to the art, by making it easily accessible even when people are just passing by or engaging other activities in the park. The Outdoor Theater is located on the south side of the building, opening to the neighboring Weiwuying Metropolitan Park, with curved lines stretching from the ground to the roof, embracing the natural environment. The Outdoor Theater's structure design with its similarity to an amphitheater, allows audiences to enjoy more diverse performances and acoustics with breeze from all directions, and to watch the beautiful landscape and sunset from the park at the same time¹⁶. The Outdoor Theater signifies a more easy-access and public art experiences which are essential to the cultural equality. The other open space, the Banyan Plaza, took inspiration from the banyan trees in the park and was designed to resemble tree trunks in the shaded open space, and is a plaza that connect all the pathways to five theaters. With its free-floating routes, it allows people to walk to five theaters from all kinds of direction with no restriction, symbolizing a more equal and yet free cultural access for the people¹⁷. A project called "The Public Piano" was initiated in March 2019, as a grand piano was placed in the center of the plaza, allowing the public to use it freely, meaning that anyone can play the piano or listen to the music. This project is a realization of the key concept of the WWY arts center, which is being the art center for everyone, and its

¹⁴ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/About/About Weiwuying, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/about?lang=en> (access on 2019/7/23).

¹⁵ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/About/Architecture, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/about?lang=en> (access on 2019/7/23).

¹⁶ National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts Weiwuying/About/Venues/Outdoor Theater, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/venues/Recital%20Hall?lang=en&mode=image> (access on 2019/07/24).

¹⁷ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/About/Venues/Banyan Plaza, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/venues?lang=en> (access on 2019/07/24).

mission to put cultural equality into practice. “The Public Piano” project is challenging to the traditional thinking linking to the piano, such as classical, fine performing art, highly educated profession and expensive tickets, by changing all that into free cultural access, free concerts, and most important of all, the possibility to create your own stage and the right to access free music anytime¹⁸.

In the aspect of space transformation and design, promoting cultural diversity means to include the important local culture elements in the design and incorporate them with practical functions or facilities. Therefore, people can identify those cultural elements and relate to their own experiences when accessing the space or using the facility of the art center. The meanings of such approach signify an innovative management and governance thinking, which focuses on the people rather than the art, the user’s side rather than the managing side, and emphasis to connect the art production with the local cultural and natural surroundings. If cultural diversity enriches the expression and content of cultural life, then promoting cultural equality means to protect such diversity and to ensure everyone having equal access to it. However, there are still many obstacles between the local people and prevailing of the cultural equality, such as political reasons, cultural habits, and long-term prejudice. These obstacles derived from the long-time uneven resources between the northern capital city Taipei and the southern industrial sea-port city Kaohsiung from the central government, in terms of city budget and culture resources. In addition, with majority of the original residents being laboring workers and immigrants, the residents of Kaohsiung are not used to participate in culture activities. However, with the political environmental change and the implantation of culture governance and establishment since 1998, the situation is gradually improving, including the WWY arts signifying even cultural resources to the southern city and the demonstration of the cultural cooperation between the local and the central government. This also explains why the Concert Hall, the Banyan Plaza, and the Outdoor Theater are designed intentionally to break those obstacles with cultural equality as its center concept, with purpose to make people feel more comfortable, more welcome without restriction, and not to be judged by their social status or culture tastes. Promoting cultural equality through space transformation and design is just a small part of the practical examples from city cultural governance. However, it projects the meanings of the significant change of cultural policies and city governance, which are the turning from vertical to linear thinking, government to users, hardware to software, and short-term economical result to long-term cultural influences.

The Artistic Program and the Reaching out Projects

The concept of cultural diversity and cultural equality can also be seen through artistic program and reaching out project. There are eight categories of the artistic program, which are Music, Theater, Dance, Family, Weiwuying Showtime, Circus & Jiggling, Concert Hall Select, and 2019 WeiWuYing Circus Platform. Traditionally, music, theater and dance are the three main categories of performing art, and it is mostly common to see productions or programs in these three categories in art centers. As we can see, the artistic program of WWY arts center includes not only these three categories but also some other different and interesting venues, such as circus & jiggling and Weiwuying showtime, which are rarely seen in conventional art centers¹⁹. The cultural diversity is reflected through the artistic programs in the following aspects, cross-border artistic production, production origins, and emergence of different venues of performing arts. First,

¹⁸ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/About/Latest News, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/news/5ca055474bb45800063f5425> (access on 2019/07/24).

¹⁹ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/Programs, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/programs?lang=en> (access on 2019/07/27).

in the cross-border artistic production, there are performances which combine with the new media, such as “Kiss and Goodbye” multimedia music theater for kids, “The Snowman” & “We’re Going on a Bear Hunt” music concert with animation films and “The Eternal Straight Line” dance theater with collaboration between the multidisciplinary choreographer Jeff Hsieh and technological art studio Ultra Combo²⁰. Also there are performances with collaborations of the cross-cultural/cross-national productions, such as the Musical “TARU”, a Korean musical with reproduction of Chinese lines, the “Amoeba” by Diabolo Dance Theater, a combination of Chinese jiggling diabolo performance and Broadway musical, and the “Monkey Show” with characters from traditional Thailand and Chinese literature presented in Chinese opera style. Second, in terms of production origins, there are performances challenging to combine different forms of artistic expressions, such as Taiwanese opera with Chinese poetry in “Wild Swans Footprints on Mud of Snow of Su Dong-Po”, a comedy musical from classic Chinese literature novel with hip-pop music in “The Journey to the West”, and a show combined with acrobatics, theater, dance in “La Verità” from Compagnia Finzi Pasca²¹. There are also performances of diverse literature origins, such as theatric productions of Taiwanese opera, Hakka opera, Chinese opera, or of diverse local culture, such as dance production of the international well-known Cloud Gate and Kaohsiung City Ballet, concert of Taiwan Air Force and Army Band, and a musical of local Hakka culture performed by the Kaohsiung Municipal Meinong Junior High School²². Last, in the aspect of emergence of different venues, productions which were original designed to perform in specific places, such as circus shows in the theme parks, jiggling in festivals or carnivals, Taiwanese operas and puppet shows in temple celebrations events, jazz in a jazz bar, and comedy show in a club, are now all brought to the WWY arts center as the regular programs, mostly seen in Weiwuying Showtime, Circus & Jiggling, and the 2019 Weiwuying Circus Platforms these three categories, as well as commonly distributed through Music, Theater, Dance, Family categories²³. By endeavoring to bring such diverse performances fitting in an arts center, it shows the determination to make easy access for culture and art expressions of all forms and classes, and to make sure that they are being seen and introduced to the public. This is a practical example of how city culture governance helps promote cultural diversity and equality by bringing people’s daily culture activities together to a public space, such as WWY arts center.

While the cultural diversity can be seen and expressed through variety of performances, the cultural equality is realized through the reaching out projects under “Learning & Participation” programs. In those programs, we can see the idea and the concept of cultural equality being transformed into practical approaches, which are performances of both educational and recreational functions, with purpose to make arts part of people’s daily lives and activities. Those practical approaches under the “Learning & Participation” programs can be categorized as following: public participation, workshops, collaboration between arts and other sectors, and the educational projects. In the public participation category, there are mostly activities requiring public interactions instead of one-way performance. These activities include “Reading Corner”, a book-reading

²⁰ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/Programs, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/programs?lang=en> (access on 2019/0727).

²¹ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/Programs, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/programs?lang=en> (access on 2019/0727).

²² Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/Programs, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/programs?lang=en> (access on 2019/0727).

²³ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/Programs/Weiwuying Showtime, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/programs?catalog=5c9310b4c74fa700062263c6&lang=en> (access on 2019/7/29).

gathering in the terrace, “Eyes and Ears” introductory program of the art center for the disabled, “Art Dialogue and Cross-Generation Conversation” events of discussion about art and performances from different age-group of people, the various “2019 Weiwuying Circus Platform” activities for the public and the kids in the outdoor spaces²⁴, and the “2019 Weiwuying Wonderland” featuring all kinds of daily activities such as yoga, watching movie, drawing, and listening to music in the Banyan Plaza²⁵. In the workshop category, there are programs designed especially for teenagers, featuring art-related themes like theater learning, me culture and art, or social-related themes like me and the society, my views of Taiwan on the international stage, my travel in Taiwan, etc. In the collaboration between arts and other sectors category, there is a project encouraging private companies’ participation in arts and seeking sponsorship to support word-class performances, in addition to educational and reaching out programs. Last, in the educational category, there are programs such as aesthetic educational programs for the elementary, junior high, and high school students, theater-art experiencing programs which invite students to the shows by giving them relating lectures afterwards, and open night-tour of the concert hall/opera house/theater back stages with educational introductions. With connecting all the common grounds of these four categories, the meaning of promoting cultural equality through reaching out projects is putting public participation as the center of the purpose by making culture activities educational, recreational, and social interactive.

Conclusions: Contributing Cultural Diversity to Cultural Sustainability Through Arts Center

As the world becomes increasingly urbanized, and societies keep changing with new cultural dimensions, cities are facing challenges from good-quality housing, increasing needs for green public spaces to ensure infrastructures and services to billions of people. Among these challenges in a global situation, culture is for certain the key resource for sustainable urban development (UNESCO, 2016). History shows that culture is the heart of urban development, for the reasons that culture makes cities vibrant, creative, and attractive living spaces, and forms coherent social complex, allowing collective body of citizens to identify themselves, to understand the importance of traditions for their lives, and to connect with the world through the traces of history, while enjoying beauty, harmony, and artistic endeavors offered by the city (UNESCO, 2016). However, how to identify the role of culture in urban development and implement it with policy-making and management strategies requires innovative thinking and creative approaches.

Among these innovative thinking and creative approaches, culture diversity plays a center role in sustainable development in cities, which includes environmental sustainability, peaceful societies, and culture inclusion. To achieve these three aspects of sustainable cities, it means to strengthen the link between communities, vibrant cultural lives and quality urban environments, through enhancement of participatory culture governance, respect of cultural diversity and the promotion of culture/gender equality (UNESCO, 2017). While culture diversity contributes to and enriches both the natural and social environment of the cities, the management of cultural diversity in urban environment can sometimes either overcome social fissures, or risk worsening them (UNESCO, 2016). With inequalities between neighborhood and districts, culture diversity can

²⁴ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/Learning & Participation/Participation for All, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/learning?catalog=5c130c72924fb30006bd699e&lang=en> (access on 2019/7/29).

²⁵ Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts/Learning & Participation/2019 Weiwuying Wonderland, <https://www.npac-weiwuying.org/learning?catalog=5c130c72924fb30006bd699e&lang=en> (access on 2019/7/29).

take forms as racism, discrimination, and xenophobia. Therefore, it is the complexation and complication between cultural diversity and society that gives us reason to engage in a more creative and innovative operation of policy-making and governance. In order to improve these irreconcilably social and cultural differences, cities need to be designed for social interaction and cohesion, and to create spaces which recognize existing social fragmentation, polarization, and inequality and serve to transform these inequality into diverse cultural expressions integrated into our daily life, under promoting respects and understanding of diversity in societies.

In addition to cultural diversity, the notions of cultures are of equal values and people are allowed to believe in the worth of their own culture, including the beliefs and values it embodies (Barry, 2001, pp. 264-271), which gives us fundamental ground of culture equality. Taking these notions into consideration, we can identify the role of culture equality in relation to sustainable urban development as social inclusion in public spaces, which enhances fundamental freedom and strengthens participation system of governance for cultural diversity. Public spaces such as street, park, monuments, plaza, cultural institutions, etc., play an important role in social inclusive process and should be accessible to all members of the community. It is only through social inclusion and open access in public spaces, that cultural equality can become the means to connect people with their tangible and intangible heritage and to safeguard the civic right of fully experiencing different aspects of the cultural diversity of the city.

WWY arts center being a cultural public space, has fully expressed cultural diversity through its design from exterior such as architecture, spaces distribution, and functions, to interior such as program content, community outreach, and nature environment. As its original intention to serve as cultural places for everyone, the ideas of cultural equality and diversity are naturally projected when cultural activities are happening everywhere at all time at the WWY arts center. As the artistic and executive director CHIEN described, cultural sustainability is best demonstrated in the phenomenon of all kinds of cultural and daily-life activities simultaneously coexisting in the WWY arts center, which also signifies both the beginning and the process of sustainability development of the city (Interview with CHIEN).

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Appendix

Interview

Mr. CHIEN Wen-Pin

The Executive and Artistic Director of the National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts Weiwuying (short as “WWY arts center” in the following interview)

2019/07/29

1. What are the main concepts considered when you were arranging the artistic programs?

CHIEN: WWY is an art center for the people, so that’s our main concept. We want to do something that other art centers haven’t achieved. There are many spaces in the art center intentionally designed to be “blank”. So we try to encourage artists to make something out of it and or to make it part of their artistic creation.

2. What’s the self-production program proportion in the annual programs?

CHIEN: It’s about 30% to 40%.

3. What were the initiation or motive that made “Circus” become one of the main themes of artistic programs?

CHIEN: We were inspired by an uprising new trend called “New Circus” in France in recent years. There is also a Centre National Des Arts Du Cirque (CNAC) in France, to promote the education and artistic/technical innovation of circus art. As I said we wanted to try things that were not done before, so the WWY arts center wanted to introduce such trend and concepts to Taiwan. The “New Circus” in nowadays is not about spectacle of animal shows and of human body limitation, but rather a performance of diverse artistic original creation combining theater, music, dance, and body movement. The “New Circus” also includes “New Magic”, which helps draw lots of families and kids to the art center. Therefore, it is a sector we value a lot.

4. What do you think of the differences between WWY arts center and other performing art centers in Taiwan? What’s the center image or presentation of WWY arts center?

CHIEN: WWY arts center was created as a civic arts space after the rotation of governmental political party in Taiwan. Unlike the National Theater and Concert Hall in Taipei as the “Palace for the Arts”, it is designed to be an “Culture Living Room”, a place without gates and with public spaces open for 24 hours. As the founder and artistic director of the world-known “Cloud Gate” dance company Lin Hwai-Min once said, “Arts should not be a standing pose with feet together, but rather with two feet apart”, meaning arts should be approached with a rather casual attitude instead of seriousness. WWY arts center is a place for exchanging of living experiences and collision of arts and life. Therefore the non-artistic sector is of equal importance as artistic sector for the WWY arts center. We also hope to achieve the goals of being a civic and living spaces for the public by setting a lower tickets price for most performances.

5. What are the connections between the WWY arts center and the local culture, and the city? And how do you fortify these connections?

CHIEN: In terms of the city and the local culture connections, we have worked with the Culture Bureau of Kaohsiung City Government since 2016 and participated in the “Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival” and the “Kaohsiung Fun Arts Summer Festival” for youngster every July. However, WWY arts center is not an art/culture center served only to the city of Kaohsiung. It’s aimed to serve the vast audiences and the people of the southern Taiwan area (south of Taichung city). The initiative program of WWY arts center “Taiwan Dance Platform”, is an example of how we dedicated to the cultural affair of southern Taiwan area, by match-making the exchanging artists program between Chia-Yi Performing Arts Center and the artists from European choreographer on-line platform “Aerowaves” in 2018.

6. What’s the relationship between the WWY arts center and the Ministry of Culture?

CHIEN: The WWY arts center is part of the National Performing Arts Center, which is an independent Administrative

Corporation taking supervision from the Ministry of Culture rather than under its governance. The WWY arts center's budget comes from the Ministry of Culture, with 15% of self-funding.

7. What are the key concepts for the diversity of program? What are the primary goals that the WWY arts center would like to promote?

CHIEN: The "Weiwuying showtime" is designed to be the platform of promoting diversity of the programs, by bringing shows of specific venues with leisure atmosphere such as jazz, comedy, Chinese talk show, and bar music into concert hall or theater hall. These shows are usually one-hour long without intermission, and with low prices as well. Our primary goal is to diminish the fear and distance people feel about performing art.

8. How is the "cultural equality" being presented at the WWY arts center?

CHIEN: The "2019 Weiwuying Wonderland" Project is aiming to promote cultural equality. It consists of various activities such as yoga, drawing, movies, napping, electrical-music party, and so forth, held in the afternoon at the Banyan Plaza. These activities are designed to make culture and arts closer to the daily life, and to make people feel easier to participate and to access arts.

9. What are the contributions and influences of the WWY arts center towards the city's sustainable culture development?

CHIEN: I think the contributions and the influences are the implementation of arts into people's daily lives, such as all kinds of daily activities being easily spotted at every corner of the arts center, whether it's folk dancing for the old people, hip-pop dancing for the young people, or walking dogs and birds from the neighboring residents. The fact that there are all kinds of cultural and artistic activities simultaneously coexist in the arts center, whether they are in the outdoor space or the indoor facilities, signifies both the beginning and the process of "cultural sustainability" development in the city.

10. What are the challenges you faced since becoming the director of the WWY arts center? And what are the goals for the future?

CHIEN: I think I will combine these two questions into one answer, which is hoping the central government to collaborate all the non-popular culture performing art industries and build them into a complete chain of arts industry, providing platforms for performing arts to exchange, collaborate, and grow.