



Building Demand for the Performing Arts

City of Madison
Performing Arts Study

Thursday, March 14, 2013

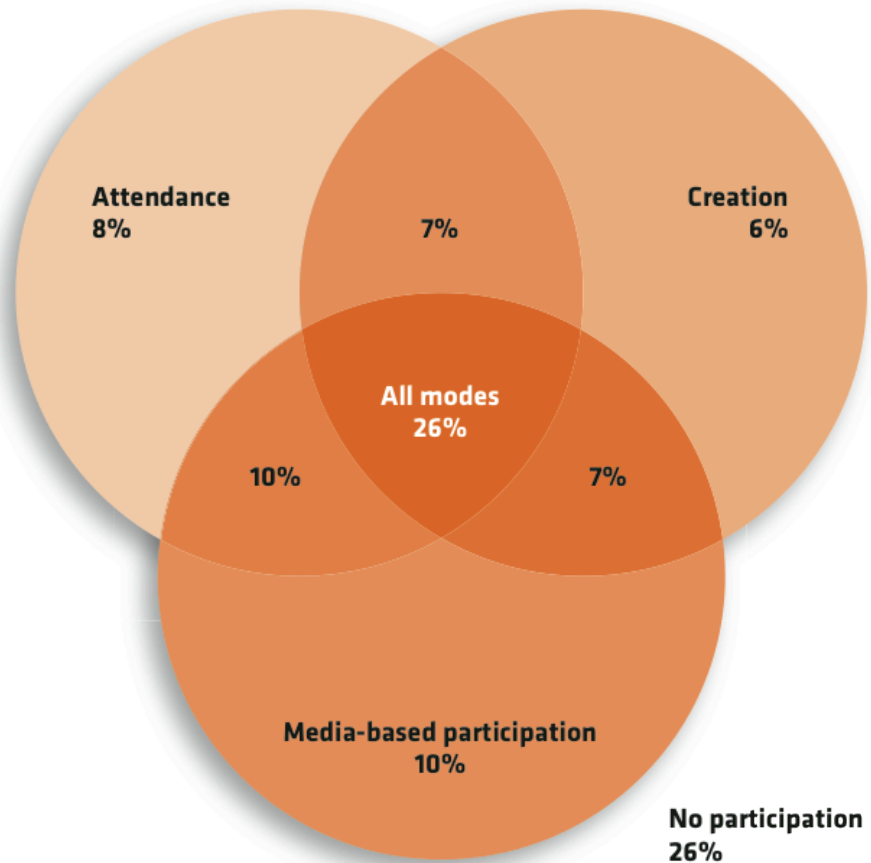
Alan Brown, Principal, WolfBrown

The Problem

- + Lower levels of arts education
 - + Increased competition from at-home activities
 - + Shift towards participatory forms of engagement
 - + Diffusing tastes
 - + Blurring line between live and digital
 - + Shortened attention spans
 - + Growing importance of social aspect
 - + Aging of the audience
- = Declining rates of participation for attendance at performing arts (NEA)**

The Complexity of Arts Participation

A multi-modal distribution of U.S. adults' arts participation rates: 2008



In Percentages of U.S. Adults

Source: Novak-Leonard & Brown, *Beyond Attendance: A multi-modal understanding of arts participation*, National Endowment for the Arts, Research Report #54, 2011

Confusing Terminology

- Marketing
- Audience development
- Audience engagement
- Community engagement (formerly “outreach”)
- Increasing Participation (Wallace Foundation c. 2002)
 - broaden, deepen, diversify

“Demand-Building” is an umbrella term

- Expanding awareness, appreciation, and attendance
 - Attendance is not the only outcome of demand-building
- Recognizes that individuals progress through stages of appreciation

What is “Demand-Building?”

- Better sales and marketing to the best prospects
 - (i.e., efficiency and ROI are the operative values here)
- Engaging audiences more deeply
 - Often seen as a retention strategy
- Cultivating new audiences amongst “inclined” target populations
- Building demand for the art form amongst “disinclined” target populations through education, exposure, and community strategies

“Building Demand”

- Can demand be built, or is demand purely a function of market forces?

“Building Demand”

- Can an individual’s aesthetic sensibility be influenced by an artist?

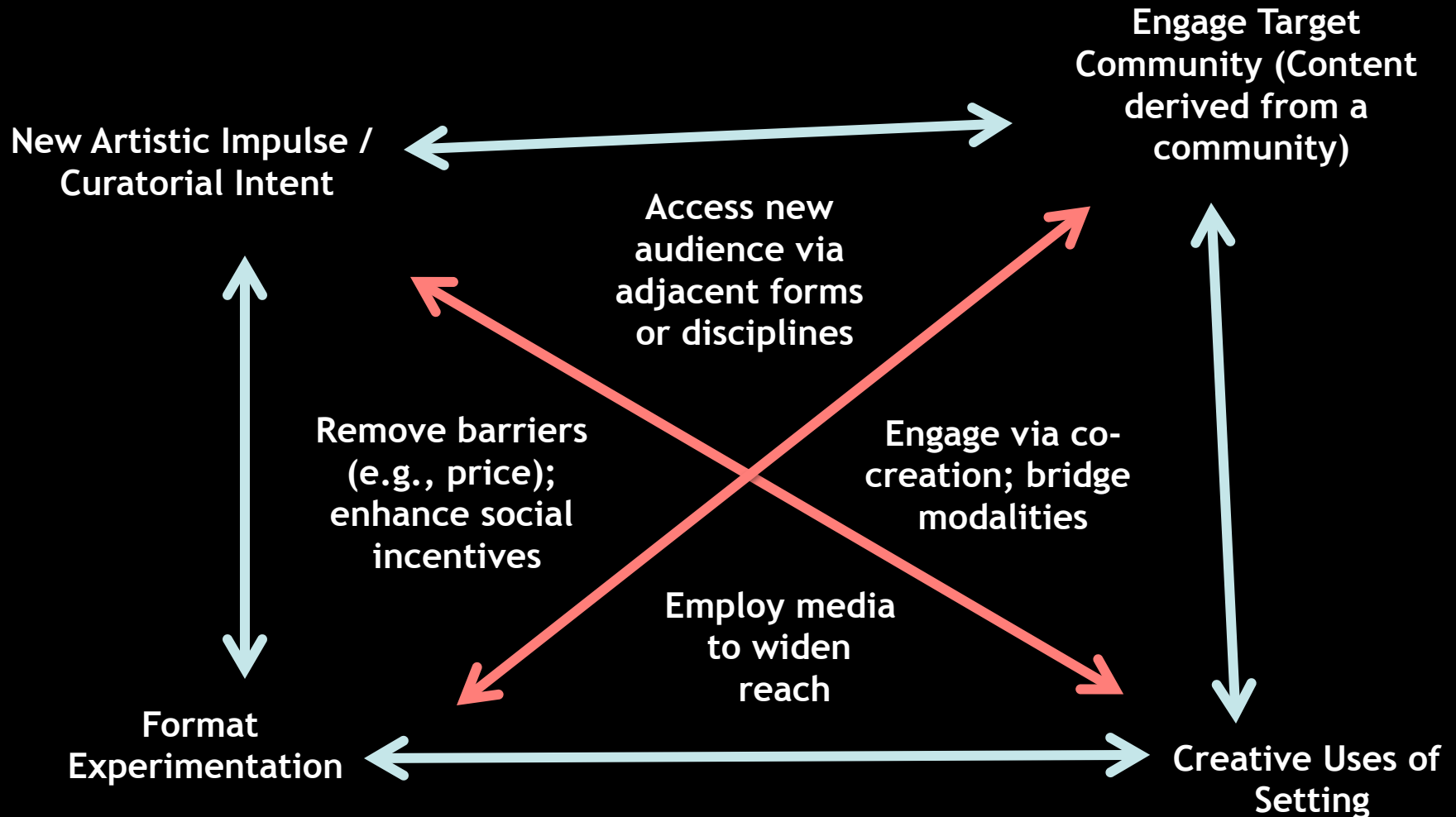
“Building Demand”

- What are the outcomes of demand-building?
- Can demand-building be successful if it never leads to paid attendance?

What is the artist's role in building demand?

- Can presenters build demand without the involvement of artists?
- Can artists build demand without presenters?
- What can be accomplished collaboratively?

Strategies for Building Demand



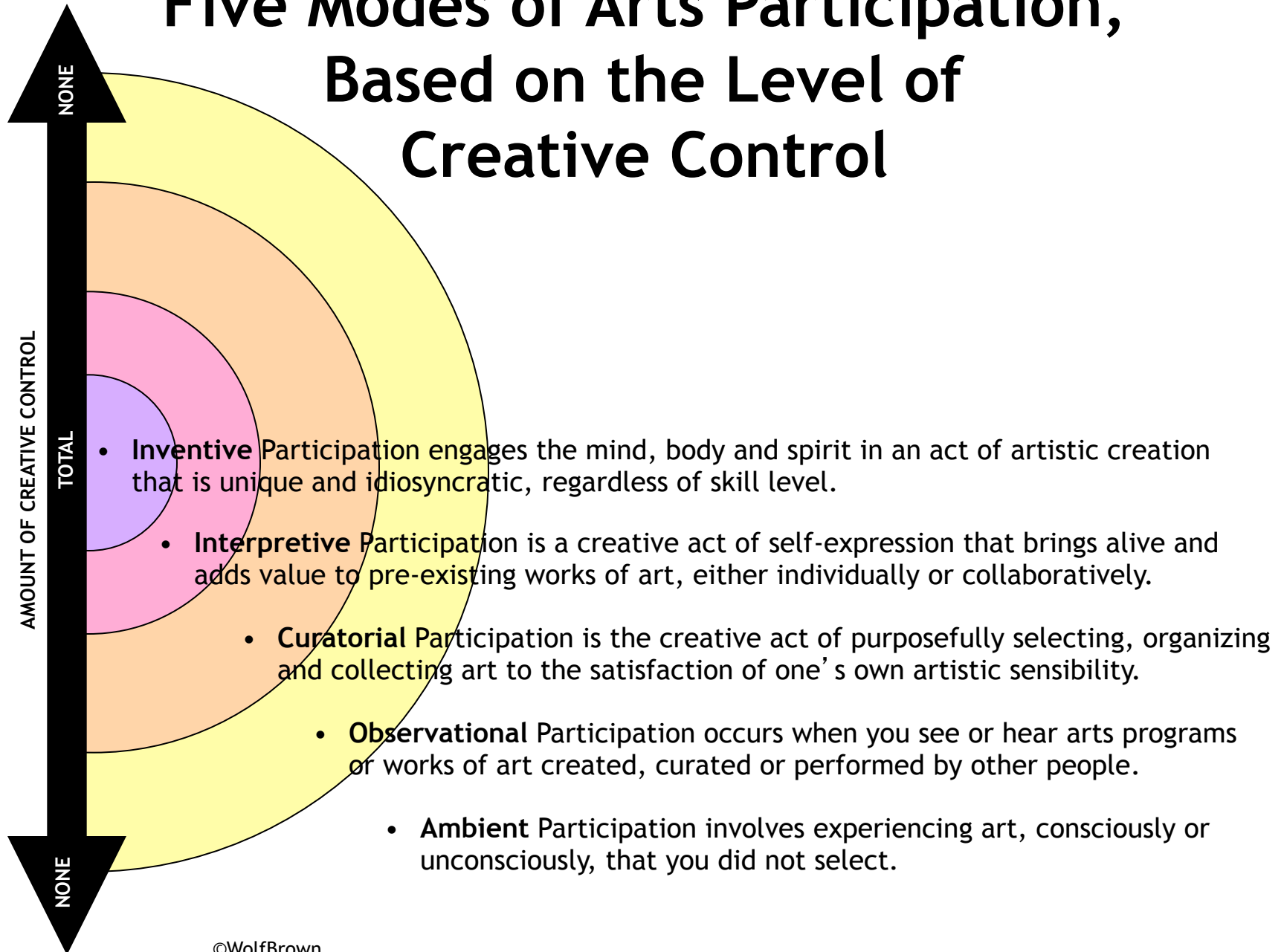
Strategy: Recontextualize art in new or unusual settings

Strategy: Experiment with alternative performance formats

Strategy: Develop new approaches to curating programs

Strategy: Co-creation / community-based artistic work / bridge modalities

Five Modes of Arts Participation, Based on the Level of Creative Control



Strategy: Access new audience via adjacent genres or disciplines

**Strategy: Lower barriers (e.g., price);
enhance social incentives**

Strategy: Employ media to widen reach

Strategy: Active participation strategies

Getting In On the Act: How arts groups are creating opportunities for active participation

Alan S. Brown and Jennifer L. Novak-Leonard, in partnership with Shelly Gilbride, PhD



<http://irvine.org/publications/publications-by-topic/arts>

Strategy: Demistification

Primary Demand vs. Selective Demand:

What can communities do collectively to stimulate primary demand?

the  bring life to life.

1-800-PHONART

**You gotta
respect a guy
who can pick up
chicks while
wearing pink
tights.**



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**There is one question at the core of demand
building:**

How is preference acquired?

Four Approaches to Preference Discovery

- Self-guided discovery
 - Often aided by technology (e.g., browsing YouTube)
- Socially-based discovery
 - e.g., recommendation from a friend, family member, or sales agent)
- Curated discovery
 - Through programming offered by arts providers
- Media-based discovery
 - e.g., seeing a new style of dance on television, hearing unfamiliar music on the radio