

PLATFORM: Audience Development Event Recap

On Saturday, 18 November 2017 we hosted another workshop as part of our professional development series, PLATFORM. We welcomed twenty participants to the Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning where we spent the afternoon thinking about ways to encourage new audiences to take part in the many cultural activities offered in Kingston. Toronto-based cultural animator Nadine Villasin Feldman delivered an informative and hands-on workshop on audience development.



Nadine Villasin Feldman is a Toronto-based arts manager and producer, with over 15 years of experience in community arts engagement and audience building. As the Community Animator for internationally acclaimed contemporary dance company Kaeja d’Dance, Nadine developed audience engagement strategies and helped produce large-scale community engagement projects that expanded Kaeja’s community outreach capacity and developed new audiences outside of the downtown Toronto core. Nadine was also a participant in the Metcalf Foundation’s 3-year long “Engaging Audiences And Building Communities” Learning Cohort.



The workshop was designed for organizations and individuals interested in thinking creatively about how to develop existing audiences, in addition to reaching new ones. The day began with brief introductions, following by a twenty minute presentation on key concepts on audience development. Key terms like core and target audience were defined and a conversation on what motivates people to participate in culture followed.

The first activity participants worked on was identifying their target audience. Based on their answers, Nadine partnered people with similar target audiences so they can work together and potentially come up with new communications or marketing strategies to attract their new desired audience. Groups shared their target audiences and workshopped their choices.



The next part of the workshop involved writing a character profile for the ideal audience member. This activity allowed participants to think about who they think should come to their performances or events workshops. It also encouraged others in the room to ask questions about barriers to participation and ways to attract that particular person in the future. Participants got concrete ideas on how they might attract a millennial interested in performing arts, or a recent retiree with a passion for history.

The workshop wrapped up with an engaging conversation and problem-solving session during which participants talked about some of their challenges or successes and asked advice both from the workshop facilitator, but also from the other people in the room.

Thank you to The Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning for their support and sponsorship of this workshop, the Juniper Cafe for the delicious snacks and coffee, and to Nadine Villasin Feldman for sharing her knowledge and time with us. And thank you to all the workshop participants for coming out to learn with us on a Saturday!

Images: Karin Pryal