

The Arts and Crafts Association of Bornholm as a community resource

By

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Background

- Start 2010 CRT Contacted by East Iceland Development Centre
- Project purpose: to place brand East Iceland arts and crafts as "creative community" (wool, wood, reindeer hide)
- Tips and best practise from Fiskars, (Finland), Nässjö (Sweden), Bornholm and Vesterålen, (Norway).
- Transfer of Innovation project (Leonardo)

Tasks and challenges

- To identify what East Iceland planners perceive, when they say “creative community”
- To find the right analytical tool to assess “best practise”
- To contextualize / explore the preconditions for the development that has taken place on Bornholm
- To speculate about how “transfer of innovation” can take place...hmm.

What do local planners (EI) mean, when they say "creative communities"

- Regional Development: From creative cities to creative rural communities
 - > Livelihood for local residents: to develop a business model for creative businesses
 - > Attract creative resources –new residents
 - > Enhance tourism through place brand
 - > Build networks outside the region (R& D)
- A real attraction to "creative processes". From communities of practise to communities of creativity
 - > Creative process is in focus (Porpiõ -community)
 - > R & D is within "creativity" and "creative processes"

Which analytical tool do you use to explore “best practice”?

- Identified that the Arts and Crafts Association of Bornholm was a model for a “Creative Community”
- Map as innovative network and consider an actor-network analysis (meaningful relations, also objects and places can be in a network)
- To identify key community functionalities and their prerequisites or contexts.

The Arts and Crafts Association of Bornholm (ACAB)

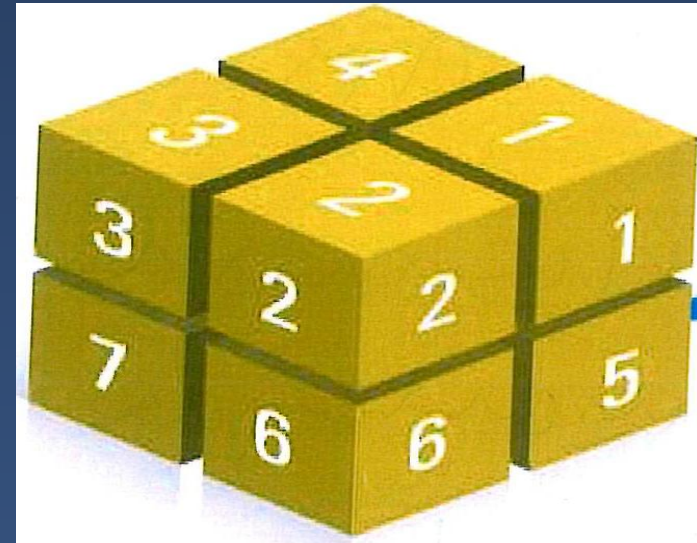
- Founded 2002
- Number of members (2012): 64
- Materials: Ceramics, glass, wood, metal, textiles, knives and other materials
- ACAB is a fixed structure (member- non-member) with an external board of censors
- Has developed through a series of projects (stoker projects)

Four pivotal organisational elements

- A nucleus of "ildsjæle"/a close-knit community of entrepreneurs, based on long-standing personal relations and trust
- A fixed exhibition venue (first the building- then the association)
- External censorship: quality control as access condition
- Arts and crafts ambassador & an association secretary

The fifth element: innovative networking

- ACAB has the ability to bring personal or firm level network contacts into the association and activate them through specific projects
- The Kubriks network model illustrates this.
- Prerequisites that individual members have resources and they will share them



Community functionalities – 1/8

- ◎ ACAB: identity marker – individually and collectively
 - > 64 individual arts and crafts artists
 - > Exclusivity (quality-assessed)
 - > Preconditions for acceptance
 - Primary profession is arts and crafts artist
 - Mark of quality is censored by Committee
 - Based on Bornholm
 - > “Us” and “them” : “we are not souvenir designers, we are not artists, we are high quality arts and crafts makers”.

Community functionalities: 2/8

- ◉ ACAB: facilitator of creative processes within a material community context
 - > Self-formed sub groups
 - > Collaborative learning and practise communities
 - > Glass, textiles, wood, ceramics, jewellery, etc.

Community functionalities – 3/8

- ◎ ACAB: framework for developing business models for arts and crafts artists
 - > Being an entrepreneur/ business owner
 - > Development of workshops - experience elements
 - > Competence building – it, entrepreneurship, marketing

Community functionalities – 4/8

- ◎ ACAB activates peripheral governance agents through sponsorships and fundraising
 - > Local private enterprises
 - > Local cultural- and business institutions
 - > Regional structural funding from EU
 - > National private funds and foundations
 - > National governance structures
 - Ministry of Culture, Denmark
 - Ministry of House, urban and rural affairs
 - International/ Scandinavian governance structures: Nordic Council of Ministers

Community functionalities – 5/8

- ◉ ACAB: knowledge community with cultural/ knowledge institutions
 - > Danish Design School for Glass and Ceramics
 - Food chain for ACAB
 - Teaching, supervising, censorship
 - Knowledge sharing (China)
 - Summer workshops
 - > Bornholm's Art Museum
 - Commitment to collect not just art but arts and crafts from Bornholm
 - Censorship committee

Community functionalities – 6/8

- ◎ ACAB as place brand
 - > Ambassador and marketing platform: attracts tourists and functions as an attraction
 - > Arts and crafts ambassador
 - > Grønbechs Gård – permanent exhibition
 - > Arts and crafts bus
 - > 44 open workshops
 - > Christmas Ship in Copenhagen/Køge
 - > Exhibitions at hotels and restaurants

Community functionalities – 7/8

- ◎ ACAB as local “cluster”/ a&c platform
 - > Functions as a local development agent, which is a part of the local governance structures (“cluster”) and an integrated part of the local development strategy
 - > Arts and crafts ambassador
 - > L.A.G. Bornholm
 - > Part of project: Cluster development in rural areas
 - > Destination Bornholm

Community functionalities – 8/8

- ◎ ACAB : the arts and crafts as a specific sector of artistic expression – locally, nationally and internationally.
 - > Member of Danish Arts and Crafts Association
 - > Member of World Crafts Association
 - > Association-based exhibitions locally – Grønbechs Gård
 - > Nationally – The Round Tower in Copenhagen
 - > Internationally – Scandinavia, London, Chigago, Luxembourg etc.

Perspectives

- ACAB is an extremely resourceful association with great value for local development
- A well-tuned organisational structure (issues of generational succession)
- A weighty place brand
- Yet: (and our study has not been concluded yet) annual turnover for individual firms is small, it is hard to make a living
- Issues about transfer of innovation
 - > Volume matters: number of local arts and crafts artists with a certain quality
 - > Visitor volume matters: reliant on local tourist base and access to markets