



# From arts marketing to audience enrichment: How digital engagement can deepen and democratize artistic exchange with audiences



Ben Walmsley

Associate Professor in Audience Engagement, School of Performance and Cultural Industries, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, UK

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received 18 October 2015  
 Received in revised form 27 June 2016  
 Accepted 4 July 2016  
 Available online 19 July 2016

### Keywords:

Audience engagement  
 Audience development  
 Arts marketing  
 Digital marketing  
 Arts management

## ABSTRACT

There remains a significant gap in the scholarly literature on the processes, benefits and challenges of digital engagement in the arts. This article presents and critically analyses the findings of one of the largest mixed-methods studies ever conducted into audience engagement with dance. Based on a rigorous mixed-methods approach comprising participant and audience surveys, discussion groups, depth interviews, netnography and content analysis of a new responsive online platform based on Liz Lerman's renowned Critical Response Process, this study investigates the potential of digital engagement to facilitate context and audience anticipation; foster a culture of constructive critical enquiry between arts organizations, artists and audiences; and break down barriers to attendance.

The study's key findings indicated that responsive digital platforms can democratize critical exchange; foster slower, more reflective critique; and positively shift perceptions of unfamiliar artforms amongst non-attenders. A sustained process of digital engagement during the creative process was revealed to facilitate contextualization and cognitive decoding and thus enhance kinaesthetic and emotional engagement during an ensuing live performance. However, confirming previous findings, it proved challenging to maintain engagement amongst online participants, particularly amongst non-attenders, which reinforced the importance of social modes of engagement.

Ultimately this kind of digital platform has the potential to encourage a deeper, richer, more relational and democratic engagement between audiences, artists and arts organizations. Beyond the arts, the platform was shown to impact positively on participants' wider feedback mechanisms, both at work and at home, indicating its potential wider educational and sociological role in enhancing interpersonal skills and encouraging empathy with others.

© 2016 The Author. Published by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## 1. Introduction

The digital engagement of arts audiences is in a serious state of flux. Whilst the arts sector is witnessing a notable groundswell of digital engagement projects, there remains a significant scholarly gap in theorizing the processes, benefits and challenges that these kinds of projects expose. In particular, although theories are starting to emerge regarding the positive impact that pre-performance context can exert on audiences' anticipation and ultimate enjoyment of a live artistic

E-mail address: [b.walmsley@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:b.walmsley@leeds.ac.uk) (B. Walmsley).

event (see Brown & Novak, 2007), these theories are lacking a robust empirical underpinning and very little research has yet been conducted into the specific role of digital technologies in facilitating such contextualization. The potential benefits of understanding how factors such as anticipation and enjoyment are related to audience development and enrichment are significant. In a world where the arts are increasingly forced to justify their shrinking public funding and counter charges of elitism (Tepper, 2008), insights into how digital communication technologies can democratize audience engagement and explicate the benefits of arts participation will inform not only scholarly debates around cultural value and policy *per se*, but also be of practical use to producers and marketers of the arts.

This article aims to highlight and address the gaps in research into digital engagement in the arts. In so doing, it will critically investigate the findings of digital engagement studies in other art forms, (e.g. Vlieghe & Rutten, 2013; Vlieghe, Muls, & Rutten, 2016), which revealed the significance of the social aspects of online participation and illustrated how online participants perceive and negotiate their role within social media environments. By presenting and discussing the findings of a large-scale qualitative study called *Respond*,<sup>1</sup> which took place over one year in 2014, the article will explore how established theories of co-creation and audience engagement actually work in practice. Addressing the most recurrent themes in the sparse literature on the digital engagement of arts audiences, the study will investigate whether a new interactive online platform (*Respond*) can successfully deepen and broaden audiences' engagement with contemporary dance and foster a culture of constructive critical enquiry between arts organizations, artists and audiences. A related aim is to explore whether the platform is able to expand the audience reach of new dance works. Ultimately, the study will provide new, rich insights into the benefits and challenges of artists engaging with a range of audiences throughout the creative process via digital platforms.

The article is structured as follows. First, a brief summary of the study itself is presented, which provides an insight into the conceptual development of the digital platform and illustrates its look and feel. This is followed by a critical review of the literature on audience engagement and on the roles that context and anticipation play in the audience experience. The aim of this review is to provide a robust theoretical framework within which questions pertaining to the digital engagement of arts audiences might be fruitfully explored. Following a discussion of the research design and methodology, the findings are presented and discussed in light of existing and emerging theories. Finally, the impact of the study is discussed by extrapolating a series of implications and conclusions, which aim to inform both scholarly thinking and professional practice.

### 1.1. Project and platform development

In March 2014 the project consortium, comprising Yorkshire Dance, the University of Leeds and Breakfast Creatives, asked for the public's help to select two new dance projects to be commissioned specifically for the *Respond* project. In the course of one week, 1600 votes were cast from around the world from a choice of six artists' video pitches shortlisted from dozens of entries by a panel constituted by Yorkshire Dance. As a result of this public vote, two artists, Hagit Yakira and Robbie Syngé, were selected to create their new pieces. In the meantime, the project team worked on developing and testing the online platform. The design and development of the *Respond* platform was heavily inspired by the American choreographer Liz Lerman's renowned Critical Response Process (CRP). The main challenges here were to translate CRP into a suitable online format that 'showed' rather than 'told'; and to make the platform appealing, interactive and 'sticky'. Fig. 1 provides a screen grab of the platform to illustrate its look and feel.

Between September and November 2014, the artists developed their work using the new *Respond* platform to engage in a creative and extended dialogue with audiences, following the highly structured process of Lerman's CRP described later in the article. During the artists' creative processes the platform went live for two separate weeks, which the project team labelled "CRP1" (19–26 September) and "CRP2" (14–21 November). The research team recruited a "closed" research group, which focussed on Hagit Yakira. Participants in this group were incentivised with a £20 payment and tickets to the live performance and asked to: attend a briefing and induction session; post at least once a day on the platform during the two CRP weeks; complete four short surveys (a baseline survey, one after each CRP week and a final survey); attend a focus group after CRP2; and be available for interviews the week following the live performances. Invitations to join the "open" group (focussed on Robbie Syngé) were promoted as widely as possible. Further details and rationale regarding the groups is provided in the methodology section. In December 2014, the two pieces, Robbie Syngé's *Douglas* and Hagit Yakira's *Air Hunger*, were publically performed at Yorkshire Dance in Leeds.

## 2. Theorizing digital engagement

As discussed in the introduction, the digital engagement of arts audiences is still in its infancy and empirical scholarly research in this niche field is notably scarce and sketchy. In order to map the constituent concepts behind digital engagement and to underpin the development of the *Respond* platform with existing research insights, a thorough literature review was conducted. Since extant studies focussed particularly on different modes and techniques of audience engagement and on the

<sup>1</sup> Full details of the project and a demonstration of the *Respond* platform can be accessed at <http://www.respondto.org>. Interviews and the final project report can be accessed at <http://artsdigitalrmd.org.uk/projects/yorkshire-dance/>

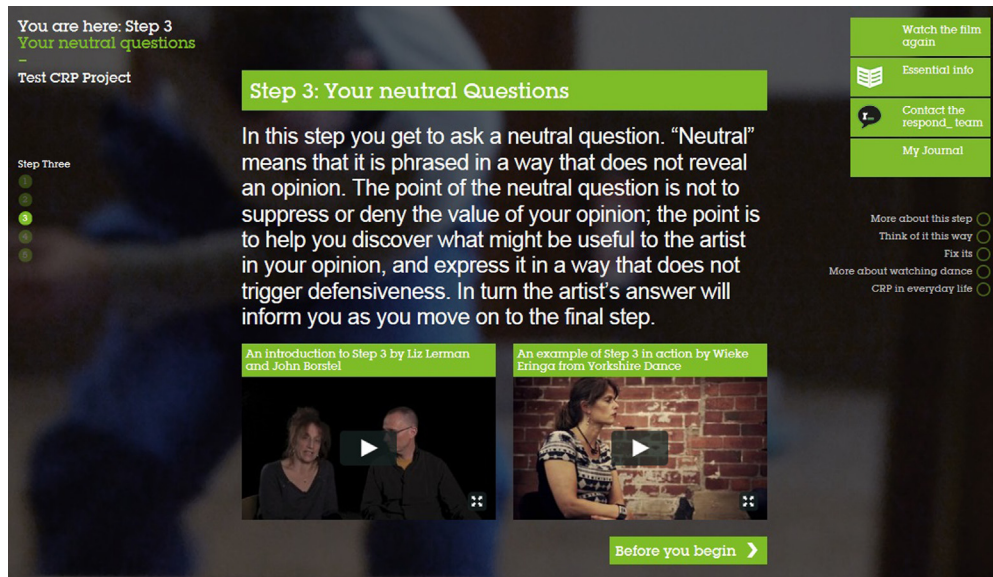


Fig. 1. The Respond platform—a screen grab of Step 3.

potential benefits of providing pre-performance context to heighten audience anticipation and impact, this review aimed to critically appraise the literature on audience engagement, context and anticipation in order to provide a robust theoretical framework within which to test emerging theories regarding the particular role of the digital.

### 2.1. Audience engagement

*Respond* was essentially conceived as a digital audience engagement project. The academic literature on audience engagement *per se* is limited (Carnwath & Brown, 2014), and scholarly studies focussing explicitly on digital engagement in the arts are almost non-existent (Conner, 2013). There is, of course, a vast literature available on the related fields of relationship marketing and customer relationship management, but this rarely concentrates on the arts and, when it does, tends to restrict its focus to segmentation strategies. Likewise, the major studies on audience engagement have focussed to date on a relatively narrow range of topics, including: theories and histories of audience reception and behaviour (e.g. Bennett, 1997; Blau, 1990); power, class and elitism (e.g. Butsch, 2008); politics and practices of participation (e.g. White, 2013); the psychology of audience experience (e.g. Burland and Pitts, 2014; Radbourne, Glow, & Johanson, 2013); audience research methodologies (e.g. Patriarche, Bilandzic, Jensen & Jurisic, 2013); engaging and educating young audiences (e.g. O'Toole, Adams, Anderson, Burton & Ewing, 2014); and the significance of 'liveness' (e.g. Auslander, 2008). The grey literature highlights how the digital engagement of arts audiences is burgeoning (Nesta, 2013), so there is a pressing need for scholarly research to respond to this digital turn and provide a more critical approach.

Audience researchers have highlighted the definitional challenges regarding the term 'engagement'. Steven Tepper defines engagement as "to interlock, to involve, or to cause" (2008, p. 363). This is a useful definition, which works well for modern audiences who "actively connect to art—discovering new meanings, appropriating it for their own purposes, creatively combining different styles and genres, offering their own critique" (ibid.). In the US, there is a growing tendency to focus, both practically and semantically, on 'audience enrichment'. Lynne Conner (2004) observes that enrichment activities afford audiences opportunities to "co-author the arts experience [and] participate – in an intelligent and responsible way – in telling its meaning" (n. p.). *Respond* was heavily inspired by both Tepper's participatory definition of engagement and Conner's interpretation of enrichment: the study aspired to explore mechanisms of interlocking and involving audiences in processes of creative development and sense-making by addressing the acknowledged gap in understanding concerning the artist-audience relationship (Brand et al., 2012). A key aim of the platform development was therefore to facilitate the more participatory end of the engagement spectrum characterized by Brown, Novak-Leonard & Gilbride (2011, p. 15) as more process-focussed and interpretive.

### 2.2. Digital engagement

The development of the cultural economy has been characterised in part by a growing culture of participation or "participatory turn" (Crawford, Gosling, Bagnall & Light, 2014). Ito (2007) relates this culture shift to the concept of "networked publics", which he invokes to explain how online audiences engage actively with media to the point where they co-create or even reinvent it. This provides an excellent illustration of what Cova (1999) calls "the linking value of

consumption". An effective example of this linking value at play is provided by the growing global phenomenon of online book clubs, tellingly referred to by some developers as 'social reading platforms'. One analysis of such platforms illustrates how their developers "attempt to reduce notions of hierarchy [and] draw on the democratic potential of social media environments to present social reading platforms as social spaces that thrive on affinity" (Vlieghe & Rutten, 2013, n. p.). They achieve this, the authors argue, by ascribing greater importance to personal experience and social interaction than to what they label "professionalization and institutionally validated expertise". This analysis supports Meyrowitz's longstanding argument that digital spaces alter "those aspects of group identity, socialization, and hierarchy that were once dependent on particular physical locations and the special experiences available in them" (1985, p. 125). They perhaps exemplify Habermas's (1989) 'public sphere'. Regardless, the democratizing nature of the digital space is exerting a profound impact on certain artforms: as Vlieghe and Rutten conclude, "literary phenomena are being redefined in terms of continuous 'post-processing' which transforms the relationships between 'production', 'mediation', and 'reception'" (2013, n. p.).

Another practical example of Cova's linking value is provided by Terry O'Sullivan's (2010) study of online engagement by a UK symphony orchestra, which found that respondents' motivations for participating in web fora included socially enhancing their cultural experiences and "obtaining privileged information" (p. 666). The study highlights the importance of creating "a clear context for activity" in order to "manage relevant dialogue" through a "substantial online presence" (p. 667), and O'Sullivan concludes that "hosted online interactivity provides a distinctive opportunity for arts organizations to position themselves as an essential resource for [ . . . ] sustaining and enhancing arts experience" (p. 668). This is perhaps because, as Crawford et al. (2014) point out, online marketing enables "bi-directional communication"; and the "dynamic process of online attention" can lead to a form of "networked engagement—a necessary corollary to having a 'voice'" (p. 1081). These recent studies cohere around the notion that the participatory turn has created networked and empowered audiences.

However, these emboldened and inter-connected new audiences are not always easy to reach and maintain. Sita Popat's (2006) work with online dance communities has highlighted the challenges of maintaining sustained digital engagement with a transient audience community. But in her discussion of the artist/participant relationship, Popat notes that interactive digital situations allow participants to "understand in detail how the artwork is created" (p. 33). Popat stresses the importance of participatory artists developing social interaction and hosting skills, and drawing on techniques of asynchronous communication in order to develop an effective partnership with audiences. This asynchronous interaction, she concludes, "can support play, reflection and development in a journey through the creative cycle" (p. 35). In developing the *Respond* platform, we were keen to explore how the asynchronicity afforded by an online platform might enhance or hamper the traditionally synchronous live process of CRP.

In her powerful exhortation of a social learning and digital approach to audience engagement, Conner (2013) argues that a pleasurable audience experience is deeply connected with the hermeneutic opportunity to discuss and interpret meaning. Echoing Miranda Boorsma's (2006) theory on co-creation, Conner maintains that effective audience engagement prioritizes processes over outcomes. Conner illustrates and elaborates the myriad benefits of digital engagement, including its ability to empower and embolden users by safeguarding their anonymity through a process of what she labels "face-to-facelessness" (p. 80). Conner also stresses the importance of 'honouring silence' in effective listening and notes that this is easier to achieve online than face-to-face. She adds that "periods of silence slow the pace and allow for a redistribution of power among the speakers" (p. 123). Conner demonstrates how effective online engagement can democratize discussion and increase audiences' access to paratextual insights, thus profoundly enhancing the "meaning making operation" (p. 79). On the other hand, she acknowledges Keen's (2007) disdain for the cult of the amateur with a withering attack on the facile nature of the Facebook 'Like', which she derides as "a gesture that eschews substantive feedback for quick, almost guerrilla-style intervention" (p. 89).

Thus while effective digital engagement has been repeatedly demonstrated to facilitate and democratize creative dialogue and support the co-creation of meaning and value, it has also been revealed as a potential cause of facile reductionism and 'fast thinking' (Kahneman, 2011). This is perhaps not surprising considering the growing backlash against the general propensity to eulogize the role of technology in supporting human endeavour. A leading proponent of this backlash is Shelly Turkle (2011), who observes that although we may always *appear* to be connected, in today's online culture, we are rarely *meaningfully* connected. Another powerful critique of what she terms the "acceleration of life in digital capitalism" is Judy Wajcman (2014), whose recent book argues that we need to be much more discriminating about the kind of technology that we want. Wajcman proposes an alternative approach to technology development based on mindfulness and 'slow time', which sits neatly within the wider Slow Movement (Honoré, 2004), complementing more established notions of slow food, slow cities, slow art and even slow love, which Lisa Henderson usefully characterizes as "slow to judge and discover the meaning of" (2008, p. 223).

### 2.3. The impact of context and anticipation

In their comprehensive quantitative study of the intrinsic impacts of the performing arts in the USA, Alan Brown and Jennifer Novak (2007) determined a positive correlation between audience anticipation and captivation. Indeed their findings revealed that the best predictor of captivation is a heightened sense of anticipation, which they define as "positive expectation" or a state of "readiness-to-receive" (pp. 10–11). Once audiences are captivated, they are significantly more likely to report having a satisfying experience. These findings regarding the positive impact of context and empathy are supported

by [Stephanie Pitts' \(2005\)](#) study of a chamber music festival, which demonstrated that audience anticipation can be enhanced by pre-performance activities like introductory talks, which can set the scene and develop empathy with performers. Based on a series of depth interviews with audiences, Pitts' article illustrates how pre-concert activities can serve a dual purpose, providing “an educative context” to the art work and “welcoming and relaxing” the audience (2005, p. 264). This, in turn, can help to engender an air of informality that can help both new and seasoned audiences feel initiated and at ease. These represent core objectives of audience development activities, especially in traditionally less accessible, non-verbal art forms such as classical music and contemporary dance.

Although within the arts sector the ultimate goal of audience development is generally interpreted as the cultivation of new audience members, it is technically a much broader term, referring not only to attracting new and existing audience members, but also to enhancing their experience and interpretive capabilities. For example, [Arts Council England \(2010\)](#) defines audience development as “activity undertaken specifically to meet the needs of existing and potential audiences and to help arts organizations to develop on-going relationships with audiences”. It recognises that “as an ethos audience development places the audience at the heart of everything the organization does”. [Rogers \(1998\)](#) perceives audience development as a combination of marketing and education, and contends that effective audience development activities should sustain and expand existing audiences; entice new attenders; and enhance their enjoyment, understanding and confidence. The design of the *Respond* platform aimed to explore the potential of digital technology to facilitate the fulfilment of all of these objectives.

The notion that new audiences lack confidence also emerges in Reason and Reynolds' study of kinaesthetic empathy, which found that for some audience members the lack of familiarity with a given artform caused “a distance and an inability to connect with or even see the movements being performed” that can effect a lack of emotional engagement (2010, p. 57). Reason and Reynolds conceptualized their findings through Bourdieusian notions of habitus and cultural capital, citing Bourdieu's claim that “a work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded ([Bourdieu, 1984, p. 2](#)). So it appears that while ‘audience development’ does and should imply both new and existing audiences, the former group may have specific needs that need to be addressed. This discrepancy influenced our decision to segment our research participants into groups depending on their declared frequency of dance attendance.

A possible solution to the alienation often experienced by new audiences is offered by participatory activities. [Nina Simon \(2010\)](#) maintains that effective audience participation is ultimately a question of design. Successful participatory design, she claims, makes relationships between artists, arts organizations and audiences “more fluid and equitable” by opening up “new ways for diverse people to express themselves and engage with institutional practice”. Based on extensive participatory practice in the field of museums, Simon has reached the conclusion that participants “thrive on constraints, not open-ended opportunities for self-expression”. These constraints, she observes, require design principles based on the concept of “scaffolding”, which culminates in a co-creative equation whereby “constraints help scaffold creative experiences”. This theory provided further justification for our decision to base *Respond* on a highly structured participatory process, which frames and limits free self-expression.

#### 2.4. Research questions

Based on the critical review and analysis of existing studies into audience engagement presented above, the empirical work aimed to investigate emerging theories on the importance of context, anticipation and digital facilitation in effective audience development and enrichment. The methodology was designed to indicate whether artists and arts organizations might benefit from harnessing digital communications technologies to develop different marketing and audience development strategies for different audience segments. We anticipated that our findings would lead arts organizations to a greater understanding of the role that digital technologies might play in mediating deeper relationships between artists and audiences by opening-up and demystifying the creative process to encourage a more democratic and porous culture of artistic exchange. We also wanted to critically investigate the challenges and possible drawbacks of digitizing a well established model of face-to-face engagement.

The methodology was specifically designed to address the following research questions:

1. What role can a responsive online platform play in broadening and deepening relationships between arts organizations, artists and audiences?
2. To what extent might it break down barriers to arts attendance?
3. How could such a platform enhance and demystify the creative process of contemporary dance and develop audiences' decoding and critical response processes?
4. To what extent might it facilitate artistic contextualization, enhance audience anticipation and foster a democratic learning culture characterized by constructive artistic enquiry and exchange?

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research design

The design aim was to develop a digital adaptation of Lerman's Critical Response Process (CRP), a responsive online platform that would enable participants to interact directly online with artists; share their interpretations of artistic ideas and works-in-progress; and exchange their responses with other participants. CRP was developed by Lerman in 1990 as a feedback system designed to empower artists to develop their work (Lerman & Borstel, 2003). The rationale behind the process is that peers and audiences can play a key role in helping artists to discover for themselves how to develop their work. Lerman is adamant that audiences should not tell artists how to achieve this, as this would usurp the artist's work, but rather guide artists to find their own future direction. So it is important to note that CRP is not a traditionally co-creative tool; instead, it places artists at the centre of a feedback framework, which they control themselves. Following a presentation of a piece of work (a finished piece, a work in progress, or even a series of concepts or ideas) a trained facilitator guides the artist (s) and a group of "responders" through a series of discussions regarding the work that has just been viewed. Lerman's ultimate goal in developing CRP was to strengthen creative relationships and encourage meaningful dialogue by developing a culture of artistic criticism based on honesty and mutual respect. Another research aim of this project was thus to investigate what role a digital platform might play in facilitating these objectives.

CRP is a highly structured discursive process that comprises four key "steps": statements of meaning; artist's questions; neutral questions; and sharing opinions (Lerman & Borstel, 2003). In Step 1, responders are asked to state what they found meaningful (i.e. stimulating, evocative, memorable, touching, unique, etc.) in the work they have just seen. The rationale here is that meaning lies at the heart of an artist's work. Step 2 enables the artist(s) to ask specific questions of the audience, so that the latter's feedback is framed around the artist's needs. In Step 3, participants are invited to ask the artist(s) neutral (i.e. open and non-opinion-based) questions about their work. The process culminates in Step 4, where responders ask permission from the artist(s) to state their opinion on a given topic or aspect of the work. The aim here is to encourage empathy and constructive criticism amongst the responders and receptiveness in the artist(s). At all times, responders are encouraged to avoid hyperbolic praise or overly negative criticism and to eschew so-called "fix-its" – personal solutions or suggestions for changes. At the end of the process (sometimes referred to as Step 5), the artist(s) are invited to feed back on the discussion and share their next steps with the audience.

The research design with our participants followed a mixed-methods approach based on a combination of audience and participant surveys, discussion groups, depth interviews, content analysis of online discussion and netnography. To address the specific research questions, and to reflect the broader definition of audience development outlined in the literature review, as well as the specific challenges faced by new audiences determined by previous studies, primary research in the closed group was undertaken with three distinct populations:

- I Artists, producers and frequent dance attenders;
- II Infrequent dance attenders;
- III Non-attenders (sampled from a range of ages, professions and social groups).

The research team recruited a sample of 10–12 participants from each of these behaviourally segmented populations, comprising a total of 32.<sup>2</sup> The research participants were briefed on the project during a live launch session in September 2014, where they were inducted onto the online platform and placed in the 'closed' group. The 'open' group attracted 55 participants, so alongside the closed group this constituted a total research sample of 87. The sheer scope and scale of the research made this one of the largest mixed-methods studies ever conducted into audience engagement with dance.

Both research groups were invited to engage in two intense weeks of CRP on the platform during the dancers' creative processes, in September and November 2014. This involved participants watching and responding to short (3–7 minute) film clips of rehearsal footage, following the four steps of CRP outlined above. Following these two intensive weeks of online engagement, the research team conducted a structured process of content analysis and netnography based on the online content produced by participants in the closed group, who were also surveyed about their experiences after both weeks of activity. In addition, a discussion group was conducted with a representative sample of the closed group following the second week of activity.

Following the final performances in December 2014, a post-show discussion was held with the closed group; a final participant survey was conducted with both the open and closed groups; and an audience survey was conducted in order to investigate any differences between the different groups (closed, open and neither—i.e. the public audience who hadn't engaged with the research project) regarding the impact of the live performance on them and their feelings towards the artists and their work. Finally, a series of semi-structured depth interviews was carried out with a sample of the closed group participants and with the two artists. The qualitative data were collated; transcribed, where necessary; and then

<sup>2</sup> Participants were recruited through an open call through the databases and professional networks of the three project partners. The 'closed' group participants were required to complete a short screening questionnaire to determine their level of arts attendance and to sign an informal letter of agreement confirming their willingness to engage in a number of specific research activities.

thematically coded on NVivo by two researchers working simultaneously but independently to reduce the possibility of bias. This process guaranteed a structured approach to the analysis (Welsh, 2002) and facilitated significant discussion of interpretative methods, which in turn effected a robust process of meta-analysis. Coding took place through an iterative-inductive process, which created space for fluidity and flexibility (O'Reilly, 2005) and enabled new themes and ideas to emerge unimpeded from the data.

### 3.2. Methods

Netnography involves studying people's online interactions. In this case, that meant observing and analysing participants' written responses, communication tone and frequency of engagement, and their dwell time on the platform. Robert Kozinets defines netnography as "participant-observational research based in online fieldwork [which] uses computer-mediated communications as a source of data to arrive at the ethnographic understanding and representation of a cultural or communal phenomenon" (2010, p. 60). Part of this netnography involved detailed content analysis of participants' written responses. This method was invoked to provide a comparative and systematic textual analysis (Seale, 2012) of our different audience segments' responses to dance. By identifying recurrent keywords and counting their prevalence amongst the different research groups, we hoped to generate "manifest content" that would facilitate an objective and interpretive analysis (ibid., p. 463). Kozinets maintains that netnography can help to generate new theories about emerging ideas and practices. As such, this method reflected the exploratory nature of this action research project and complemented the quantitative methods employed in the audience and participant surveys as well as the qualitative methods adopted in the discussion group and interviews.

Qualitative methods were selected as the dominant mode of enquiry as they have been shown consistently to facilitate "nuanced, context-dependent analysis" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005; p. 242). However, it is important to acknowledge the epistemological challenges inherent to any qualitative enquiry into the audience experience. As Reason and Reynolds rightly concede, "the *how* of the cognitive processes that occur while audiences are watching a performance is largely out of reach to audience research that by definition takes place after the event. In some sense, therefore, the primary experience is available only through the refraction of conscious reflection" (2010, p. 71). The core aim of the research design was therefore to attempt to *refract* participants' reflections on their online and live experiences through a structured process of "guided introspection" (Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993). This involved a stepped, mixed-methods approach whereby participants progressed from closed, Likert scale survey questions to open questions and then were offered the chance to partake in a discussion group. Finally, four key participants were selected for a follow-up depth interview, based on a combined method of theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and purposive sampling (Seale, 2012), which was employed here to test out emerging theories by selecting certain participants to elaborate on thematically significant ideas they had expressed in earlier stages of the research process (Ghariani, Touzani, & Creton, 2015). This produced a number of deep, rich insights that elucidated the quantitative enquiry.

## 4. Findings and discussion

The empirical research culminated in a series of original and insightful findings, some of which have significant implications for emerging practices and processes of audience development and enrichment. This section presents the key findings in the context of the core theoretical concepts outlined earlier in the literature review.

### 4.1. Digital engagement

Despite the inevitable technical hitches at the start of the engagement phase of the project, initial feedback from participants was predominantly positive, with 62% of respondents to the post-CRP1 survey reporting a positive experience of using the platform and 67% stating that they managed to convey their thoughts successfully. Overall, there was consensus from the artists and participants that despite the "frustrating technical hitches" and occasional lack of interactivity, the platform encouraged a more "considered", "deep", "honest", "structured", "succinct" and "mindful" approach to critical response than a verbal, face-to-face exchange. Some participants noted the inherent tension between the "snappy and superficial" habits usually encouraged by digital communications and the "thoughtful and analytical" process fostered by CRP.

However, following the first live week of *Respond* (CRP1), we observed that a high number of participants were completing the four-step process in one sitting on the platform, as opposed to waiting for the artist's responses and interacting with other participants. This was both significant and worrying, because the initial aim of the platform was to foster a communal and interactive experience. We therefore became aware that participants were experiencing the platform independently and were sometimes acting in isolation. This made us question whether the online format and the language we were using on the platform were conducive to a social online experience. The sense of an online community and the ability to view the experience of others seemed to be lacking from the site and so the experience was not reflective of how CRP usually functions amongst a group in dialogue, together in a physical space. Nor did it appear to resemble the social reading platforms discussed earlier in the article. Conversely, there was clear evidence from the netnographic observation that users were engaging deeply, emotively and reflexively with the dance clips and with the questions posed by the artists.

For example, in response to the first of Robbie Synge's rehearsal clips, one participant offered the following statement of meaning:

Douglas feels quite lonely to me . . . something to do with all those chairs that no one's going to sit in. The changes from daylight to night-dark make me wonder if he's killing an almost infinite amount of time. The activities feel like ways of combating boredom. Childlike, simplistic, physically reckless in the way that children can so often be. It makes me feel sad – particularly the moment when the out-of-tune piano starts up in an echoing room.

This carefully considered and highly reflective response from a frequent attender reflected the general level of deep engagement from the research participants who actively participated in CRP1. These kinds of responses occasionally sparked off conversation threads amongst the participants, and were often responded to directly from the artists, as illustrated in the following example:

Lovely observations there, thank you! I am definitely interested in this behaviour and why we might discard it growing up. Definitely some meaningful connections you're making.

Rhetorical analysis of these artist-participant exchanges indicated a different kind and level of discussion from the more hesitant and under-developed feedback provided at the live post-show discussion and highlighted the potential of the digital to foster a deeper, more open kind of critical exchange. Another example came from a non-attender, who confessed in interview that although she wouldn't have the confidence to talk in a live environment, the platform enabled her to express her opinion more freely. By the end of CRP1, she was responding directly to the artist's questions as follows:

I don't think I have a fixed idea about that. All I know is that I want the audience to *feel* something, to *sense* something, so the reaction is *visceral* and not only intellectual.

This type of response confirmed the findings of the content analysis of online interactions, which revealed that frequent attenders tended to focus more on *process*, whereas infrequent and non-attenders appeared to be much more focussed on *emotions*. For example, one of the frequent attenders (a dancer himself) wanted much more insight into the artist's process (rather than a finished work-in-progress) and suggested a live feed into the rehearsal room as a means of achieving this. He felt that the short web film constituted too much of a polished product to allow any fresh insight into the creative process. This peer focus on process, as opposed to output, illustrated Whatley and Varney's concept of "choreo-cognition", the generally unseen, un-explained cognitive process and intuition that they claim resides within choreographers and dancers (2010, p. 60). This insight highlighted the reductive nature of *Respond's* reliance on film-clips but conversely suggested another potential engagement benefit of digitally capturing the artistic process: i.e. to develop choreo-cognition.

At the other end of the engagement spectrum, the non-attender quoted above experienced considerable artistic development during the process. She fed back that reading other people's comments made her feel "less intimidated" and that she was "on the right lines". She really enjoyed the film clips, reporting that they made her feel "intrigued" about how dance was made and how the piece developed. When she saw the live performance, she "felt there was a storyline and not just dancing, which I probably would have done [if I'd not taken part in the study]". By contrast she had to "concentrate really hard" in the piece she had not participated in (*Douglas*). However, she also felt the process was a bit "drawn-out" and that clearer instructions were needed at some points. She didn't get much direct response from the artists, so she wasn't sure if her comments had been read, which made her feel "removed". This supports O'Sullivan's (2010) conclusion regarding the need to host and manage dialogue through substantial online presence.

Both artists reported after CRP1 that they were impressed at the level and depth of user engagement. As Robbie Synge commented: compared with "live CRP", the online process was "more reflective, more expansive, a different mode of expression [and] the act of doing it is more generative". Robbie appreciated the fact that the platform gave him the opportunity to "re-read and reflect back on" his and other people's comments, but felt that it was missing a "moment of dialogue". This point was reinforced by several survey participants, who called for "more interaction with others" and greater "collaboration and feedback". This finding supported Vlieghe and Rutten's (2013) insistence on the importance of incorporating personal experience and social interaction on web platforms, and confirmed O'Sullivan's finding that online participants in the arts are partly motivated by enhancing their cultural experiences in a social context. The perceived lack of socialization on the platform led the project team to alter the functionality, look and feel of the platform before the next phase of the project (CRP2), in order to allow users to take part in live web chats and respond via subject threads to each other's online comments.

However, despite these changes, when participants were asked what changes they would make to the platform during the focus group following CRP2, the most common call was still for more interaction with other participants. Respondents also called for greater clarity and simplicity and for automated email reminders, both to prompt them to engage with the platform more frequently and to notify them when the artist had responded to their comments. Mobile compatibility was another common request for future versions of the platform. An interesting dilemma for the development team emerged as several participants requested a mechanism that would allow them to revisit and amend their feedback. The danger here was that this might encourage groupthink and inhibit more immediate, spontaneous, original and visceral commentary. But participants seemed to want to be more in control of their online presence and be able to change and develop their comments as their views and ideas progressed along the process. They particularly praised the online journal (see Fig. 1) for enabling them to do this in private.



One infrequent attendee, a university lecturer, commented that her participation in the study had been life-changing. When asked how the process might affect the way she gave feedback in future, she replied:

It's almost like a rebirth . . . it has been incredibly profound [ . . . ]. I actually felt, during the process, that what I had to say was taken seriously and perhaps valued and whatever thoughts I had were actually being recorded. And so, in a way, it forced me to think more about what I *did* think. But I think the whole CRP thing does that anyway; [ . . . ] you've got this kneejerk reaction, which we all have nowadays. It makes you stand back and [ . . . ] think, be mindful about your first reactions.

This participant valued the “analytical and reflective” nature of *Respond* and perceived it as an antidote to what she labelled “pundit culture”. When urged to elaborate on this, she argued that:

people with anything are brought onto media, they're made pundits; and I think that's highly dangerous because the minute you're a pundit you have this sense of self-worth, which in a way gets between you and the message you have delivered. And the message becomes fossilized because you're a pundit; so it doesn't change, it doesn't evolve, you don't get feedback. It's almost that you are there, the other person is here, there's a hierarchy of thought; and that is really rather dangerous.

This participant felt that CRP's distaste for the “fix-it” (attempts to provide any quick artistic ‘solutions’) helped to avoid this ‘fossilization’ by encouraging a more mindful, democratic and constructive approach to delivering a critical response.<sup>3</sup> This position reflected the views of the film critic [Mark Kermode \(2013\)](#), who sets out a strong case for ‘slow reviewing’ in his book *Hatchet Job: Love movies, hate critics*. It also supported both Andrew Keen and Lynne Conner's respective attacks on the rising cult of the amateur and guerrilla-style online engagement, while echoing Shelly Turkle and Judy Wajcman's calls for communications technologies to engender a more meaningful, mindful form of connectivity.

#### 4.2. Context and anticipation

A particularly meaningful outcome of the digital platform was the way in which it contextualized the dance works by providing privileged insights into the artists' creative processes. Participants fed back that the platform helped them to develop a “close relationship” with the artists and with their fellow participants, and to express their thoughts expansively and “in different ways”. One infrequent attendee confided that it made him feel “like an insider”, suggesting a degree of initiation into the habitus of contemporary dance and a development of cultural capital ([Bourdieu, 1984](#)). However, a minority of participants missed the “layers of dialogue” that can emanate from a live discussion and felt that the physical absence of artists prevented non-verbal empathy and made the process feel a little “cold” and “impersonal”.

When asked if the process had affected their feelings about seeing the final performance, the vast majority of participants (86%) replied that it had exerted a positive impact. Positive responses here included participants feeling “intrigued”, “involved”, “important”, “connected” and enjoying “a sense of ownership”. This type of response suggested that *Respond* had succeeded in generating a positive sense of anticipation, reminiscent of [Brown and Novak's \(2007\)](#) concept of “readiness-to-receive”, which they found to be a key predictor of captivation and ultimately of positive impact. Providing further insights into the role and power of anticipation, one non-attender responded as follows:

I feel as if I'm now *attached* to the work and that I'm a part of the development, even if it's just as a viewer. I am looking forward to the performance more because I will be able to understand it in its entirety and read it with prior knowledge instead of just reading a quick blurb in a programme and attending like any other audience member. I feel somewhat *privileged*! It's quite lovely.

Regarding the impact of the background context provided by the platform, two participants communicated in interview that the digital engagement process had helped them to “do the hard work” before seeing the final performance. This indicates the potential of employing digital engagement during the creative process to remove a common barrier to artistic impact and enjoyment. For example, one infrequent attendee reported feeling that she had “done a lot of the thinking” during the two CRP weeks, so she imagined that seeing the performance would give her “a really rich [and] embodied experience” as opposed to “seeing it cold”. This supported Conner's argument that context can make cultural interpretation “cognitively easier” and enable deeper interpretations (2013, p. 113). It also reflected [Matthew Reason's \(2010\)](#) assertion that audience members often engage in processes of “emotional and kinaesthetic empathy”, which lead them to “invest sympathy” in characters and experience performances “with their whole bodies” (p. 19).

The potential of the platform to separate cognitive from kinaesthetic engagement provided a practical illustration of John Dewey's “rhythm of surrender and reflection” theory, which holds that reflection cannot occur during an absorbing experience (2005, p. 144). So the platform supported the theory that encouraging audiences to reflect on the work *before* a performance enabled them to immerse themselves more deeply in the live experience. As [Daniel Kahneman \(2011\)](#) might put it, the platform facilitated the separation, while encouraging the complementarity, of two distinct modes of thinking: System 2 (slow, logical and deliberate) *before* the performance; and System 1 (fast, emotional and instinctive) *during* the live event.

<sup>3</sup> On the online platform, participants received an automatic pop-up warning if the start of their sentence seemed to be leading to a potential “fix-it”.

On the other hand, two participants (one non-attender, one infrequent attender) reported feeling “confused” following CRP1, and one frequent attender (a dancer) felt that the process had actually jeopardised his potential enjoyment of the ensuing performance:

I am looking forward to seeing the work; however I feel that I won't be able to enjoy it as much as I will be looking at it with informed analytical eyes. So as a reader/feedback process it's great; but to engage the audience in the work, I'm not so sure.

Indeed our findings indicated that digital platforms of this nature might actually work more effectively with non- and infrequent attenders than with frequent attenders and peers. This challenges the findings of some existing studies into co-creation (e.g. Walmsley, 2013) that co-creative projects generally attract a niche, highly engaged audience segment. It seems that the key difference here is technology: non- and infrequent attenders communicated that they felt less intimidated to engage online, where they could reflect in peace and enjoy some degree of anonymity. This supports existing research findings regarding the benefits of digital anonymity, e.g. Conner's assertion that the “face-to-facelessness” of digital platforms can generate “a new kind of liquid courage when it comes to stating an opinion” (2013, p. 80). Most of the frequent attenders, on the other hand, felt that the platform added limited value, as they already enjoyed privileged access to artists and their creative processes.

This realisation led us to ponder whether the real practical benefit of the platform was ultimately as an audience development tool. This emergent hypothesis was strengthened by interviews with the infrequent and non-attenders, one of whom fed back on her experience as follows:

I had always loved dance but felt a lot of it was inaccessible to me because I didn't have ‘the knowledge’ and vocabulary to appreciate it fully. [ . . . ] Having not heard of Liz Lerman's work previously, I realized that it was possible to engage in dialogue with an artist/artistic work without opinionated, and often received, judgment playing a huge part in the process. [ . . . ] Creating, especially initial creation, is scary and I, therefore, also felt great respect and admiration for [the artists] – that they were actually prepared to offer up their creative works in progress and share/question that work in a dialogue with us.

One non-attender experienced an even greater transformation, claiming that the process had changed her entire outlook on contemporary dance: “I am looking forward to it [the final performance] more as my initial preconceptions of contemporary dance as an esoteric art form have been (mostly) dispelled.” Our hypothesis was confirmed quite explicitly by one infrequent attender, who fed back: “I feel more ‘open’ to dance now and more stimulated to read more about dance and [ . . . ] go and see more dance.” These findings confirmed the conclusions of earlier studies regarding the particular needs and concerns of new audiences (e.g. Reason & Reynolds, 2010), as well as the positive role that context and paratexts can play in breaking down barriers to attendance and enhancing audience experience (Brown & Novak, 2007; Conner, 2013).

When asked whether the process had affected their ability to provide constructive feedback and whether it might encourage them to attend dance more frequently, the overall consensus was that *Respond* had challenged almost all of the participants (89%) to be more open, empathetic, questioning and confident in providing feedback, in many different contexts. This confirmed the findings of previous studies into the impact of effective audience development and participatory activity. But participants' predictions of the process's potential impact on their attendance patterns were mixed, with 55% reporting that it was unlikely to encourage them to attend dance performances more frequently. However, this figure was negatively skewed by the frequent attenders: 62% of the infrequent non-attenders stated that it might indeed make them attend more often, offering yet further indication of the platform's capabilities to develop new audiences.

## 5. Impact: implications, limitations and conclusions

The findings of this project have significant implications for audiences, artists, arts organizations, marketers, web platform developers and cultural policymakers. The research has generated original insights into the benefits of sustained digital engagement between artists and audiences, which include: encouraging greater reflexivity; facilitating a more kinaesthetic and absorbing engagement with live performance; encouraging a more generative creative process; empowering less frequent attenders to engage in artistic dialogue; and changing non-attenders' perceptions of unfamiliar art forms. Our findings indicate that this type of platform may appeal more to new audiences and infrequent attenders and that these segments seem to dwell more on emotions than on process. Any targeted use of digital platforms should also consider engagement typologies such as those proposed by Brown and Ratzkin (2011): initiatives like *Respond* are likely to appeal especially to “insight seekers” and “technology-based processors”.

Overall, the platform has demonstrated its potential to serve as an effective audience development tool and move audience engagement (and indeed the wider field of arts marketing) well beyond the standard transactional processes into a more artistic, human, dialogic realm. *Respond* has proven its ability to foster artistic exchange, which Brown and Ratzkin define as “the transference of emotion and meaning between an artist or curator and the public” (2011, p. 5). This kind of engagement exemplifies Boorsma's (2006) conception of co-creation, whereby audiences give “meaning to the artefact by means of their imaginative powers” (p. 85). It also reflects Bourriard's definition of “relational art” as “intersubjective encounters [ . . . ] in which meaning is elaborated collectively” (cited in Bishop, 2004, p. 54, original italics). Furthermore, this kind of two-way interaction is indicative of an effective Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) model, whereby

'senders' and 'receivers' are connected via a communications feedback loop, which can facilitate the decoding process and increase customer loyalty and brand equity (Pickton & Broderick, 2005). This study thus has profound implications for arts marketers, producers and managers, and has the potential to revolutionize the way in which arts organizations engage with their artists and audiences, bringing a whole new meaning to Customer Relationship Management. It challenges the traditional conceptualization of marketing by demonstrating how networked publics in this participatory era seek engagement opportunities that might lead to enrichment, rather than transactional marketing communications that merely seek to attract them.

However, it is important to acknowledge the inherent limitations of this study as well as to highlight future challenges and potential avenues for further research and development. The main limitation was the relatively high drop-out rate amongst the non-attenders sample and the fact that the participants were only engaged with one piece of dance. Future studies of digital engagement in the arts might benefit from working with larger sample populations across a greater number of artworks (and possibly art forms). In particular, a larger sample of non-attenders might be recruited and more heavily incentivized in a future study in order to test the emerging hypothesis that this kind of platform has the potential to function as an effective audience development tool.

Another limitation was the possibility of positive bias: as Johanson and Glow (2015) concede, qualitative audience research is subject to a number of ethical and methodological challenges, including audiences' tendency to empathize with researchers and artists. In this study, many participants seem to empathize deeply with the artists, and this might well have skewed their perceptions of the process itself. Positive bias is perhaps even more challenging to overcome than maintaining engagement, particularly in studies aiming to facilitate and research notions like artistic exchange and empathy. It should perhaps be acknowledged therefore as a given in many qualitative approaches to audience research.

The biggest challenge during the life cycle of the project was maintaining momentum amongst participants, especially amongst new audiences. This presented us with the somewhat paradoxical reality that the group most likely to gain from this form of digital engagement was also the least inclined to engage and significantly more likely to drop out. Confirming the conclusions of Vlieghe et al. (2016), our findings indicated that a possible solution to this conundrum might be to focus any future development on making the platform as playful, sticky, social and interactive as possible. Online users are increasingly accustomed to apps, and to what one participant termed "a dopamine hit"; the platform could address this by providing automatic notifications when an artist or fellow participant has read and/or responded to a post. Another challenge is to maximise participants' dwell time on the platform and to encourage them to engage with the platform more reflectively. The enhanced socialization seemingly offered by many reading platforms could offer significant design insights here.

Challenges for funders and organizations include the apparent need to provide professional development for artists to enhance their digital presence; to film their creative development in an interesting, open and high quality way; and to pose enticing and productive questions. Another organizational challenge will be the need to resource the hosting and facilitation of the online process during periods of intensive engagement. This confirms the findings of O'Sullivan's (2010) study, which highlighted the additional strain that digital engagement can place on arts organizations.

Ultimately, digital platforms of this nature could provide the arts sector with a highly structured, tried-and-tested model for maximising audience development and enrichment, which could potentially revolutionise arts organizations' audience engagement strategies and speed up the adoption of the more open, porous, dialogic, informally networked and digitized business models advocated by recent research into the arts and cultural industries (e.g. Bolton, Cooper, Antrobus, Ludlow, & Tebbutt, 2011; Hewison and Holden, 2011). They also offer a practical way of realizing a more relational style of marketing and cultural engagement by opening up more direct and meaningful communication channels between arts organizations and their key stakeholders. These kinds of tools can clearly facilitate Steven Tepper's (2008) concept of engagement, whereby audiences actively connect to art; discover new meanings; and offer their own critique. They seem to provide a workable alternative to the negative aspects of the types of communications technologies chastised by the likes of Turkle and Wajcman by encouraging a slow, structured, mindful critique that draws on Kahneman's two systems of thinking. Indeed there are indications that they could even herald a new age of slow digital engagement that might provide an antidote to the kneejerk ephemerality of many popular social media platforms and encourage both artists and audiences to review artistic work more deliberately and democratically, and dwell together more often online. There are significant implications for both the practice of and research into arts marketing and audience engagement here, which lend further credence to Bourgonjon and Soetaert's (2013, n. p.) claim that digitization "is changing the landscape of scholarship in the humanities and social sciences".

Beyond the arts sector itself, the *Respond* participants highlighted the pedagogical potential of the platform to improve peer-to-peer feedback in performing arts courses, colleges and conservatoires. Its utility in specialized methods and techniques like Laban Movement Analysis is readily apparent. But further afield, the platform has the potential to inform other subjects and pursuits taught and coached through visual media such as nursing, sport, yoga, surgery and archaeology. And on a personal level, the experience seemed to impact positively on participants' approach to providing feedback, both at work and at home, indicating its potential sociological role in enhancing interpersonal skills and encouraging empathy with others. This supports Liz Lerman's claim that CRP constitutes an effective feedback mechanism for anything people make, from dance to dessert (Lerman & Borstel, 2003). So while this platform has demonstrated the ability of carefully structured digital platforms to develop new and enrich existing audiences, it has also demonstrated its potential value as a positive pedagogical and social learning and engagement tool.

## Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts, which was funded by Nesta, Arts and Humanities Research Council and the National Lottery through Arts Council England. As this was a collaborative project, I would like to thank Dr Laura Griffiths, Dr Julie Brown and Professor Sita Popat for their insights, support and advice throughout the course of this study. I would also like to thank our key industry partners, Yorkshire Dance and Breakfast Creatives (particularly Wieke Eringa, Antony Dunn and Nick Ellwood) for the many hours of shared discussion, good humour and debate.

## References

- Arts Council England (2010). *Audience development and marketing*. London: Arts Council England.
- Auslander, P. (2008). *Liveness: performance in a mediated culture*, 2nd ed. Oxon: Routledge.
- Bennett, S. (1997). *Theatre audiences: a theory of production and reception*, 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
- Bishop, C. (2004). Antagonism and relational aesthetics. *October*, 110, 51–79.
- Blau, H. (1990). *The audience*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Bolton, M., Cooper, C., Antrobus, C., Ludlow, J., & Tebbutt, H. (2011). *Capital matters: how to build financial resilience in the UK's arts and cultural sector*. London: Mission Models Money.
- Boorsma, M. (2006). A strategic logic for arts marketing: integrating customer value and artistic objectives. *The International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 12(1), 73–92.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Bourgonjon, J., & Soetaert, R. (2013). Video games and citizenship. *Comparative Literature and Culture*, 15(3) n.p.
- Brand, G., Sloboda, J., Saul, B., & Hathaway, M. (2012). The reciprocal relationship between jazz musicians and audiences in live performances: a pilot qualitative study. *Psychology of Music*, 40(5), 634–651.
- Brown, A. S., & Novak, J. L. (2007). *Assessing the intrinsic impacts of a live performance*. San Francisco: WolfBrown.
- Brown, A. S., & Ratzkin, R. (2011). *Making sense of audience engagement: a critical assessment of efforts by nonprofit arts organizations to engage audiences and visitors in deeper and more impactful arts experiences*. San Francisco: The San Francisco Foundation.
- Brown, A. S., Novak-Leonard, J. L., & Gilbride, S. (2011). *Getting in on the act: how arts groups are creating opportunities for active participation*. San Francisco, CA: The James Irvine Foundation.
- Burland, K., & Pitts, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Coughing and clapping: investigating audience experience*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Butsch, R. (2008). *The citizen audience: crowds, publics, and individuals*. New York: Routledge.
- Carnwath, J. D., & Brown, A. S. (2014). *Understanding the value and impacts of cultural experiences: a literature review*. London: Arts Council England.
- Conner, L. (2004). Who gets to tell the meaning? Building audience enrichment. *GIA Reader*, 15(1) n.p.
- Conner, L. (2013). *Audience engagement and the role of arts talk in the digital era*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cova, B. (1999). From marketing to societal: when the link is more important than the thing. In D. Brownlie, M. Saren, R. Wensley, & R. Whittington (Eds.), *Rethinking marketing: towards critical marketing accountings* (pp. 64–83). London: Sage.
- Crawford, G., Gosling, V., Bagnall, G., & Light, B. (2014). Is there an app for that? A case study of the potentials and limitations of the participatory turn and networked publics for classical music audience engagement. *Information Communication Society*, 17(9), 1072–1085.
- Ghariani, G., Touzani, M., & Creton, L. (2015). Exploration of the concept of cinephilia in the context of an emerging country: the case of Tunisia. *International Journal of Arts Management*, 17(2), 33–51.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.
- Habermas, J. (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Henderson, L. (2008). Slow love. *The Communication Review*, 11(3), 219–224.
- Hewison, R., & Holden, J. (2011). *The cultural leadership handbook: how to run a creative organization*. Farnham: Gower.
- Honoré, C. (2004). *In praise of slow: how a worldwide movement is challenging the cult of speed*. London: Orion.
- Ito, M. (2007). Introduction. In K. Varnelis (Ed.), *Networked publics*. London: MIT Press.
- Johanson, K., & Glow, H. (2015). A virtuous circle: the positive evaluation phenomenon in arts audience research. *Participations*, 12(1), 254–270.
- Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, fast and slow*. London; New York: Penguin.
- Keen, A. (2007). *The cult of the amateur: how today's internet is killing our culture and assaulting our economy*. London: Nicholas Brealey.
- Kermode, M. (2013). *Hatchet job: love movies, hate critics*. London: Picador.
- Kozinets, R. (2010). *Netnography: doing ethnographic research online*. London: Sage.
- Lerman, L., & Borstel, J. (2003). *Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process: a method for getting useful feedback on anything you make from dance to dessert*. New York: Dance Exchange, Inc.
- Meyrowitz, J. (1985). *No sense of place: the impact of electronic media on social behavior*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nesta (2013). *Digital culture: how arts and cultural organisations in England use technology*. London: Nesta.
- O'Toole, J., Adams, R.-J., Anderson, M., Burton, B., & Ewing, R. (Eds.). (2014). *Young audiences, theatre and the cultural conversation*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- O'Reilly, K. (2005). *Ethnographic methods*. London; New York: Routledge.
- O'Sullivan, T. (2010). Dangling conversations: web-forum use by a symphony orchestra's audience members. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 26(7–8), 656–670.
- Patriarche, G., Bilandzic, H., Jensen, J. L., & Jurisic, J. (2013). *Audience research methodologies: between innovation and consolidation*. London: Routledge.
- Pickton, D., & Broderick, A. (2005). *Integrated marketing communications*, 2nd ed. Harlow: Pearson.
- Pitts, S. E. (2005). What makes an audience? Investigating the roles and experiences of listeners at a chamber music festival. *Music and Letters*, 86(2), 257–269.
- Popat, S. (2006). *Invisible connections: dance, choreography and internet communities*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Radbourne, J., Glow, H., & Johanson, K. (Eds.). (2013). *The audience experience: a critical analysis of audiences in the performing arts*. Bristol: Intellect.
- Reason, M., & Reynolds, D. (2010). Kinesthesia, empathy, and related pleasures: an inquiry into audience experiences of watching dance. *Dance Research Journal*, 42(2), 49–75.
- Reason, M. (2010). Asking the audience: audience research and the experience of theatre. *About Performance*, 10, 15–34.
- Rogers, R. (1998). *Audience development: collaborations between education and marketing*. England: London Arts Council.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: the art of hearing data*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA; London: Sage.
- Seale, C. (2012). *Researching society and culture*. London: Sage.
- Simon, N. (2010). *The participatory museum*. Santa Cruz: Museum 2.0.
- Tepper, S. J. (2008). The next great transformation: leveraging policy and research to advance cultural vitality. In S. J. Tepper, & B. Ivy (Eds.), *Engaging art: the next great transformation of America's cultural life* (pp. 363–383). Oxon: Routledge.
- Turkle, S. (2011). *Alone together: why we expect more from technology and less from each other*. New York: Basic Books.
- Vlieghe, J., & Rutten, K. (2013). Rhetorical analysis of literary culture in social reading platforms. *Comparative Literature and Culture*, 15(3) [n.p.].
- Vlieghe, J., Muls, J., & Rutten, K. (2016). Everybody reads: reader engagement with literature in social media environments. *Poetics*, 54, 25–37.

- Wajcman, J. (2014). *Pressed for time: the acceleration of life in digital capitalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wallendorf, M., & Brucks, M. (1993). Introspection in consumer research: implementation and implications. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(3), 339–359.
- Walmsley, B. (2013). Co-creating theatre: authentic engagement or inter-legitimation? *Cultural Trends*, 22(2), 108–118.
- Welsh, E. (2002). Dealing with data: using NVivo in the qualitative data analysis process. *Qualitative Social Research*, 3(2) [n.p.].
- Whatley, S., & Varney, R. (2010). Siobhan Davies Dance online: the digital archive and documenting the dance making process. In N. Leclercq, L. Rossion, & A. Jones (Eds.), *Capturing the essence of performance* (pp. 57–63). Brussels: Peter Lang.
- White, G. (2013). *Audience participation in theatre: aesthetics of the invitation*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

**Dr Ben Walmsley** is Associate Professor in Audience Engagement in the School of Performance and Cultural Industries at the University of Leeds (UK), where he lectures and researches in areas related to arts management, arts marketing, cultural value and cultural policy. Prior to his academic career, he managed a small touring theatre company before working as a Producer at the National Theatre of Scotland. Ben is an Artistic Assessor for Arts Council England and recently evaluated the national Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Programme. In 2014 he worked as Co-Investigator on an Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project to explore cultural value as a complex system. Ben is currently writing a research monograph on audience engagement which will be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2017.