

Free Culture Forum and new models for a sustainable creativity

Jaron Rowan

Free Culture Forum/YProductions/La-Ex
jaron@ypsite.net,
<http://fcforum.net/es>

Abstract. During the talk I will introduce the work carried out by the FCF and engage in some of the debates that have taken place in this arena. I will focus on the idea of cultural commons and how the creative industries have tended to use this pool of common knowledge as a resource that doesn't need to be cared for or looked after. I will look into business and social forms of organization aimed at producing culture acknowledging social production and the creative basins that lie at the centre of cultural development. After all it is our responsibility, as civil society, to oppose practices that plunder this common heritage and to block its future development. We need to defend and expand the sphere in which human creativity and knowledge can prosper freely and sustainably.

1 Content

The FCForum brings together key organisations and active voices in the spheres of free/libre culture and knowledge. It responds to the need for an international arena in which to put together and coordinate a global framework for action.

Standing up to the powerful lobbies of the copyright industries, the FCForum is a space for creating tools and strengthening civil society in regards to the creation and distribution of art, culture and knowledge in the digital age. After an initial phase in which free/libre culture emerged, grew and expanded, there is now an urgent need to re-think the existing economic structures for the production, financing and funding of culture. Many of the old models no longer work. They have become unsustainable and detrimental to civil society. We need to define and promote innovative strategies that make cultural practices sustainable and empower the wealth of society in general.

Our work aims to be useful for the following: To provide arguments for policy reformers: as a tool with which to lobby policy makers, institutions and governmental agencies, in order to influence the legislative changes that are currently in process. To offer individuals, as active subjects, tools for dealing with the paradigm changes that are taking place in the fields of knowledge and creative and cultural production. To create a network of affinity and global collaboration, based on a common interest in defending free/libre culture.

At the first FcForum in 2009, we analysed a series of reforms that would have to be applied to existing legislation in order to ensure that the digital age is beneficial to artists, citizens and entrepreneurs. Our conclusions and proposals are published in the Charter for Innovation, Creativity and Access to Knowledge. For the 2010 edition, we shifted the focus to the economic aspects of culture and knowledge production, exploring the way in which benefits in the sense of economic profit, but also social and cognitive benefits can be generated in such a way that they lead to a sustainable culture.

This debate has to be approached through three core questions: How should culture and knowledge be produced in the digital age? How can the time and resources required to create them be made available, in the current context? How should value that is generated collectively be accessed and managed?

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2 About the Author

Jaron Rowan Cultural producer and researcher, I am one of the founding members of YProductions (www.ypsite.net) and I am also member of La-Ex (<http://la-ex.net/>) a platform specialized in helping citizens against abuses of royalties management societies and cultural industries lobbies. I was one of the coordinators of 2010 Free Culture Forum (<http://fcforum.net/es>) and co-drafted and co-edited the Sustainable Models for Creativity in the Digital Age document. I have recently published the book *Emprendizajes en Cultura* (Traficantes de Sueos, 2010) a research into the discourses and problems derived from the implementation of cultural entrepreneurship programs in Spain.