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*Beyond Attendance: A  
Multi-Modal  
Understanding of Arts  
Participation*

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# Overview

- Context & Conceptual Frameworks
- Research Aims
- Result Highlights
- Overview of Implications

# Despite a changed environment, the key measure of arts participation has been attendance

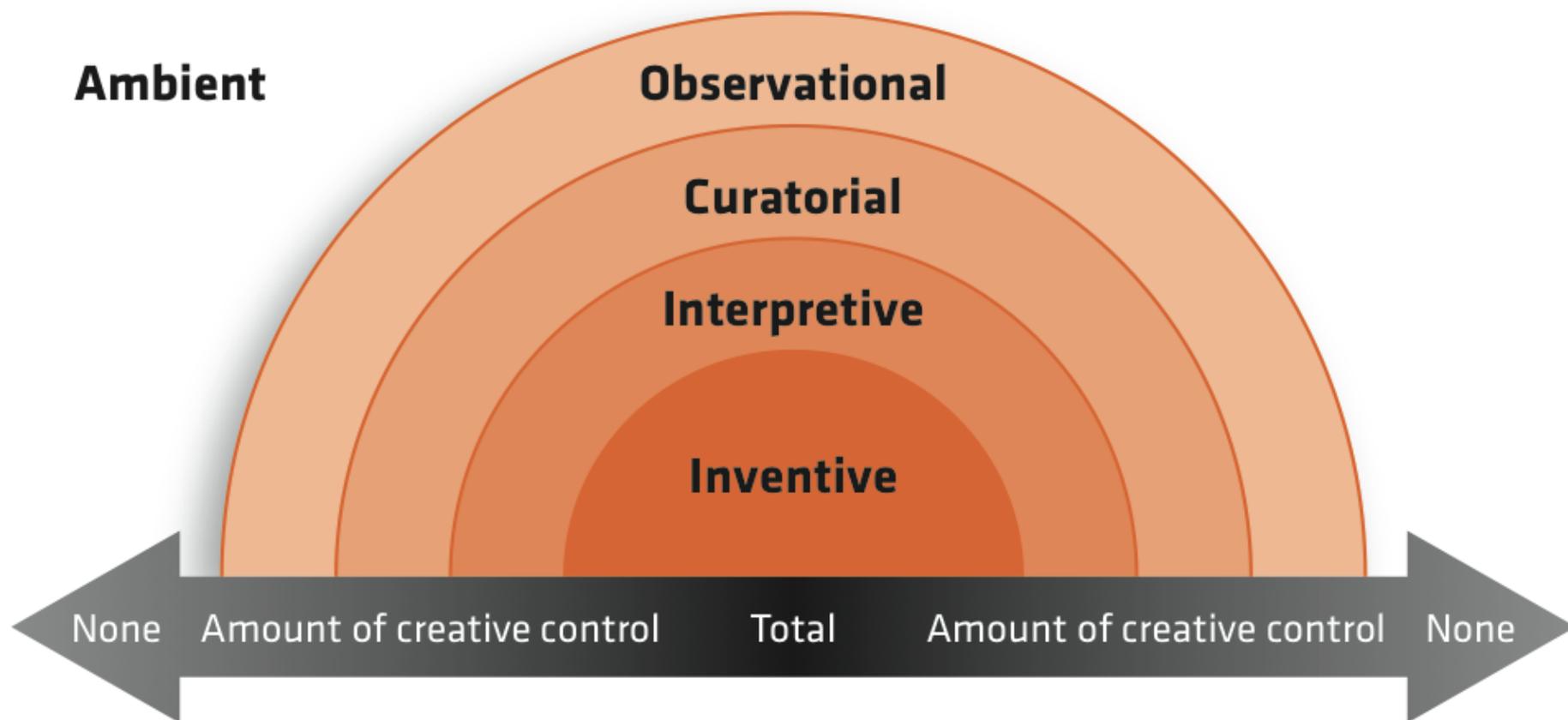
- SPPA provides a consistent baseline of attendance at “benchmark” arts events
- The environment in which arts organizations function has changed since the first SPPA. Cultural shifts shaping ‘arts participation’ include:
  - Proliferation of technology
  - Diversification
  - Accessibility & flexibility

- What framework for ‘arts participation’ is relevant?
- Using that framework, what can be learned from the SPPA?
- What are the implications for practice & policy?

# More relevant conceptual frameworks are needed for measuring arts participation

1. The skill level of the artist or participant
2. The form of artistic expression
3. The setting in which the activity occurs
4. The degree to which the individual exercises creative control over the activity

# Five modes of arts participation framework



Source: Brown, Alan S. *The Values Study: Rediscovering the Meaning and Value of Arts Participation*. Hartford, CT, Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, 2004.

<http://www.ct.gov/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=2327&Q=302202&cctPNavCtr=#44114>

# Cultural Ecology Framework



Adapted from Kreidler, John, and Philip J. Trounstine. *Creative Community Index: Measuring Progress Toward A Vibrant Silicon Valley*. San Jose, CA: Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley, 2005. [www.ci-sv.org/pdf/Index-2005.pdf](http://www.ci-sv.org/pdf/Index-2005.pdf)



## Research Aims

## Analyze arts participation rates...

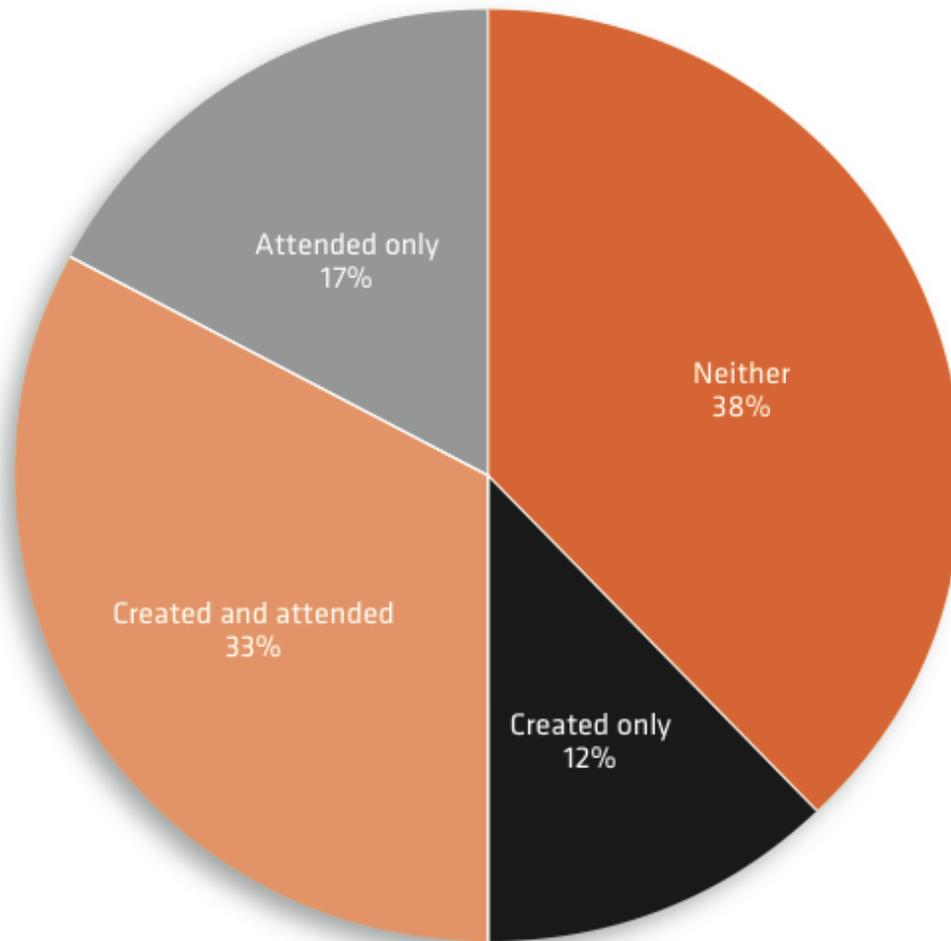
- *within* each mode
- using a broad set of demographics
- the impact of arts education
- ***between modes*** – emphasizing, a closer look at the relationship between attendance and personal arts creation
- and over time



## **Result Highlights - Attendance & Arts Creation**

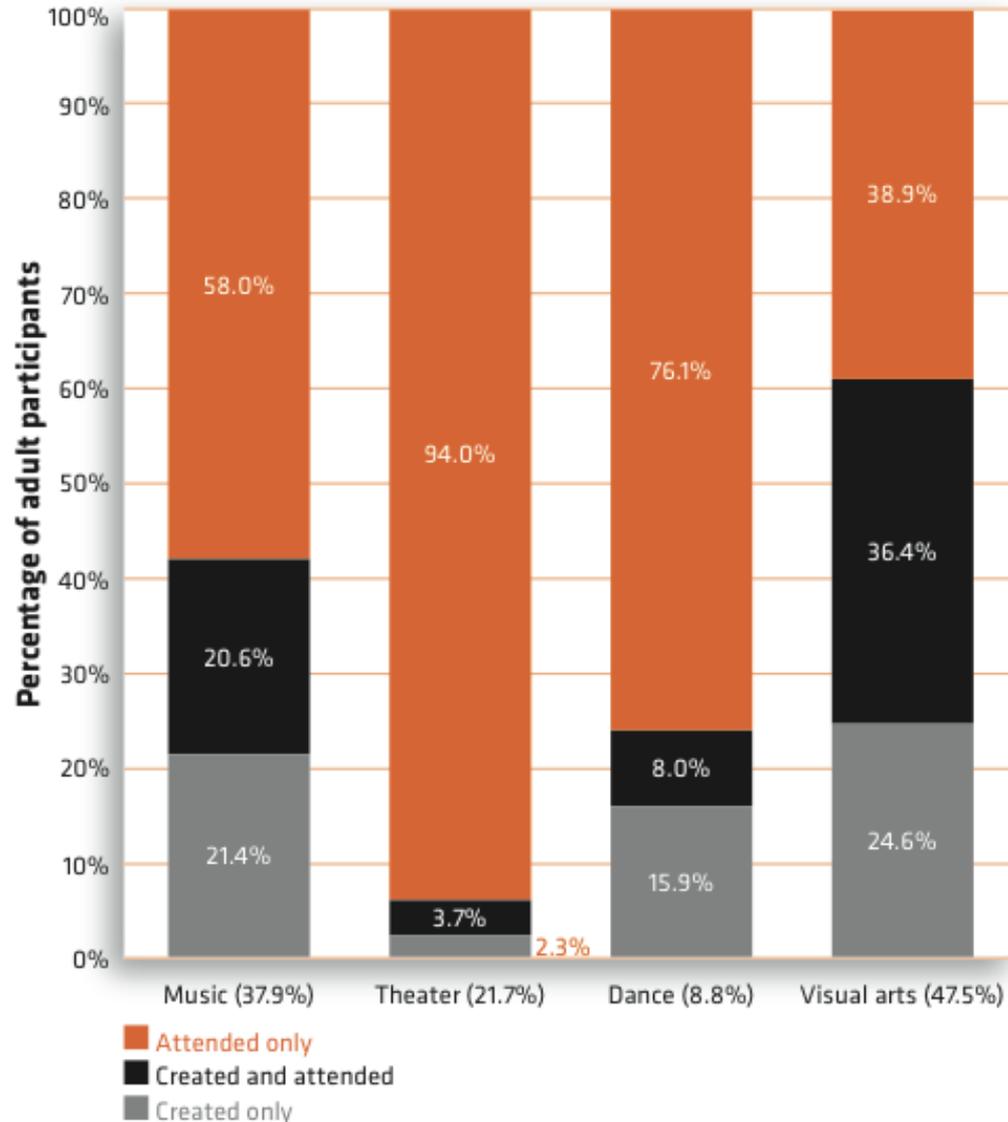


### Distribution of U.S. adults based on participation in arts attendance and arts creation: 2008



- In 2007-08, one out of three U.S. adults participated in the arts through both creation and attendance.

## Distribution of U.S. adults based on participation in arts attendance and arts creation, by discipline: 2008



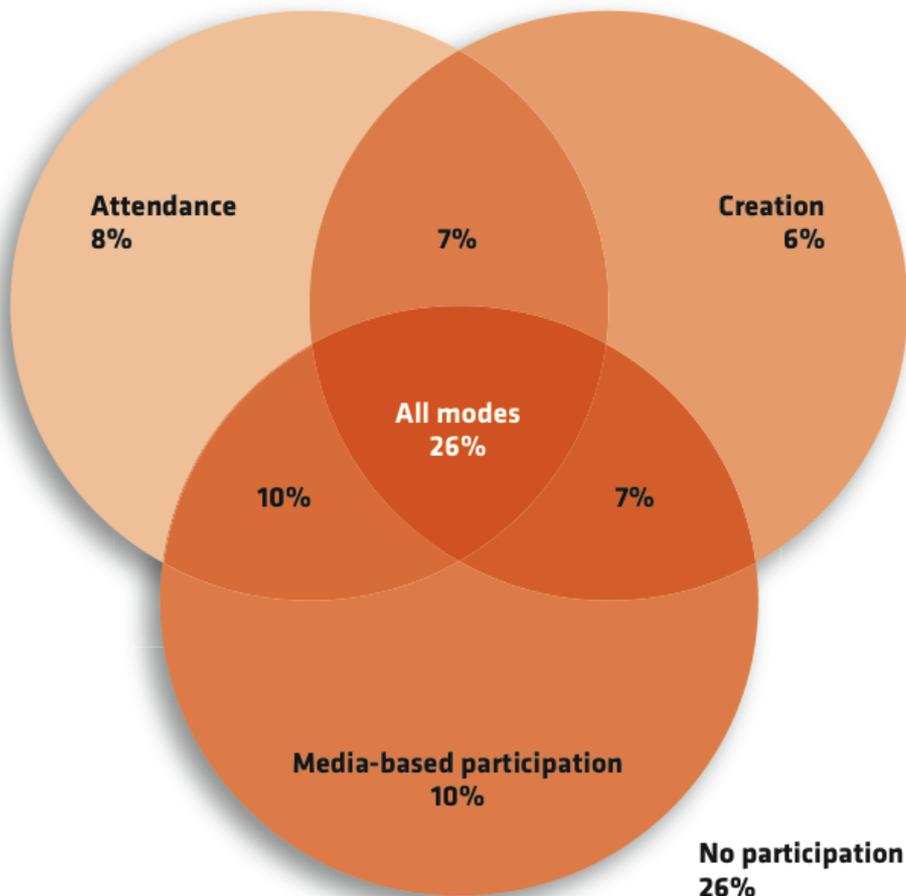
Excluding adults who participate via media only, this graph looks at the relationship between attendance and arts creation.

- The greatest overlap of participation for attendance and creation are in visual arts (36%) and music (21%)



## Result Highlights - all 3 modes

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

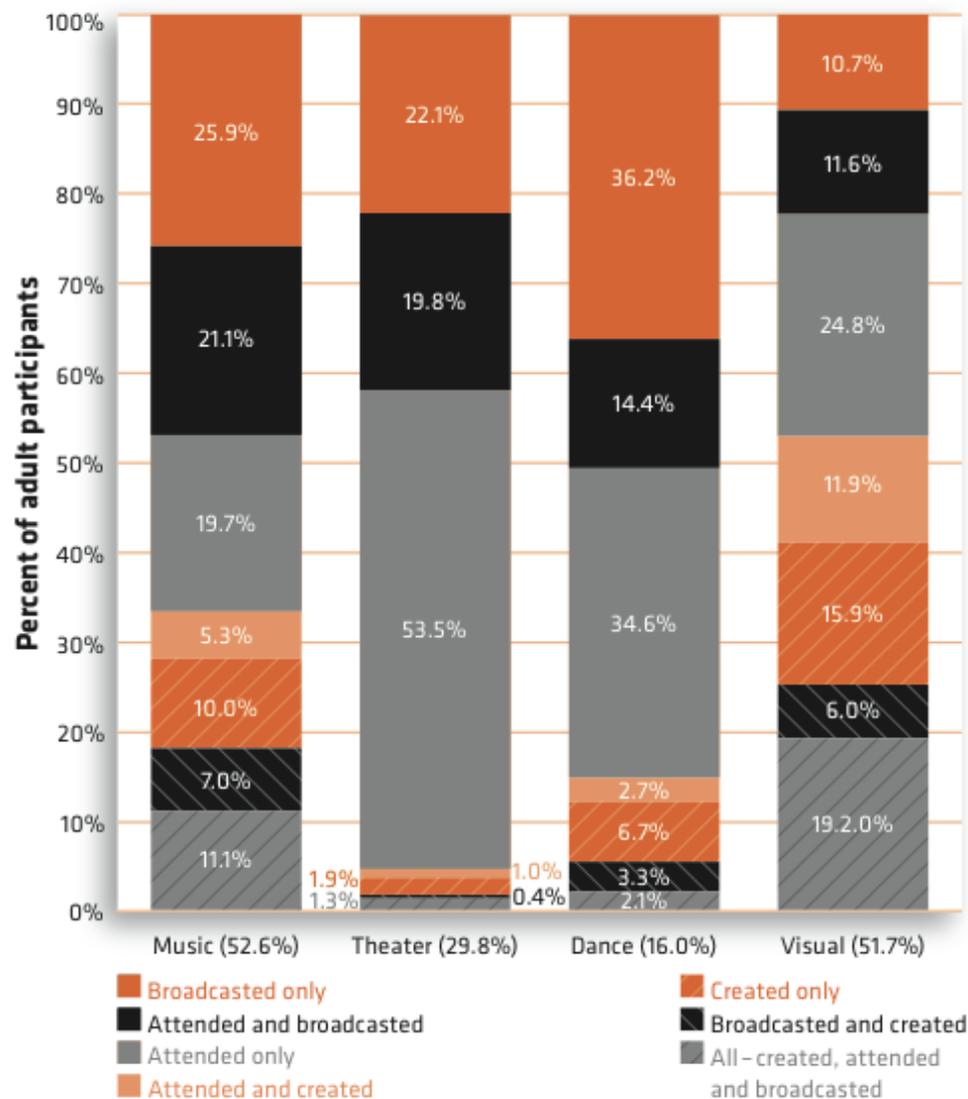


In Percentages of U.S. Adults

- 74% of US adults reported arts participation
- Rates of US adult participation in each *mode* – attendance, arts creation & performance, and electronic media-based participation - are roughly equivalent (approx. 50%)
- Approximately 1 in 4 adults (23%) reported arts participation exclusive of attendance



## A multi-modal distribution of U.S. adults' arts participation rates, by artistic discipline: 2008



- Over half of US adults participate in music (52.6%) and music (51.7%); adult participation rates are substantially lower for theater (29.8%) and dance (16.0%)
- The majority of participation in theater and visual arts is through attendance, whereas the majority of participation in music and dance are through electronic-media.

## Additional result highlights

- Demographics explain...
  - <20% of the variation in attendance rates at benchmark arts events
  - <6% of the variation in arts creation and performance participation rates
  - The monograph includes exploratory analyses as to what explains the remaining variation in participation rates.
- Adults who have ever taken an arts lessons are approximately 30% more likely to..
  - attend arts events
  - participate in arts creation activities
  - to listen/watch broadcasts or recordings



## Overview of Implications

# Adopting a broader arts participation framework has implications for practice & policy

- Practice
  - Strategies for engaging people in the creation of artistic work
  - Strategies for engaging audiences and visitors inside and beyond arts-purposed venues
  - Rethinking the usage of art infrastructure
- Policy
  - Shifts the focus away from indicators of the health of the audience base for non-profit arts organizations toward a focus on the scope of artistic and cultural expression of individuals
  - Encourages inquiry into the arts that are relevant to different communities (both socio-demographically and geographically)
  - Poses opportunities for new investment strategies

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