

# From Independent Publishers to Literary Festivals: Exploring the Challenges and Changes in the Publishing Industry and the Impact of Cultural Policy

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## Introduction

As book sales rise and new literary forms and platforms for publishing emerge, the modern publishing industry still faces a number of complex challenges and changes. The discrepancy between the success of big industry players and the struggles of many cultural workers within the literary field, illustrates the realities of creative industries shaped by policy and economy and signals the need for new forms of engagement and visibility. The rising popularity of literary events and festivals, and the new forms of engagement and exposure they offer, however, suggests that modern publishing has found ways to adapt to a market and an industry otherwise dominated by algorithms, mass consumption and increasingly difficult working conditions for many authors. Exploring these complexities, as well as the potential of cultural policy and the creative industries, offers an insight into the workings of modern publishing.

The discourse surrounding cultural policy and the understanding of the creative industries has come a long way since the introduction of critical cultural studies and Adorno and Horkheimer's critique of mass culture and consumption in the 1940s. From this critical and more distanced approach to the culture producing industries came a turn towards what is now known as the creative industries, a term first introduced in the UK in 1998 when the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) defined the creative industries as consisting of the sectors 'advertising, architecture, arts and antique markets, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, performing arts, publishing, software and computer services and television and radio' (Flew 10). This categorical approach to the industries signalled a growing focus on their economic potential, and sought to inspire

a cultural policy that would stimulate and support the growth of the creative industries. Despite being introduced under different political and social circumstances, the DCMS categorisation has since laid the foundation for much debate on the creative industries and related policy matters, such as the creation, implementation and adaptation of cultural policies. Both policy makers and creative professionals have since had to navigate significant structural changes to the creative industries brought about by new technologies, growing digitalisation and economic globalisation, and these changing conditions have led to ‘new arguments about the value of the arts and cultural sectors’ (Flew 168), as will become clear when further exploring cultural policies, individual industries and local organisations.

As such, seeing as ‘cultural policies remain a very important foundation for creative industries’ (Birch 53), understanding what kind of actions governments can take through policy to promote culture, and the effects of these actions, is crucial to the exploration of the link between culture, industry and economy in a contemporary context. The complex nature of cultural policy, cultural economy and labour will be demonstrated and analysed by taking a closer look at a local organisation, the literary festival LiteratureXchange, and by introducing the changes and challenges within the publishing industry and the literary field as a whole. Furthermore, this will allow for an insight into the working conditions of those employed in the creative industries.

## **Cultural economy and publishing**

The creative industries have faced a number of challenges, as they have been subject to both changing political and technological climates and the publishing industry is no exception. David Hesmondhalgh addresses many of these changes and challenges in his book *The Cultural Industries*, in which he lists some of the major shifts to have taken place within what he calls the *cultural* industries. The main changes are: the central role which the industries have come to play in many major economies, a change in ownership structure, altered content control, the new ways in which digitalisation has made content available across multiple platforms, the significant change in government policy relating to the cultural industries and, in turn, how the industries have increasingly come to influence local policy (Hesmondhalgh 4-5). While not an exhaustive list, they nevertheless act as a framework in which to consider the particular challenges facing the publishing industry.

A report published by the Arts Council England on the conditions of the publishing industry and the models of support for publishing and literary fiction in a contemporary context, offers an extensive insight into the challenges facing publishers, both large and small, as well as the working

conditions of authors and the ways in which they are supported through various means. The report found that many publishers and writers are struggling financially, that book sales have gone down and the price of a work of literary fiction fallen over the last decade. This means that, generally speaking, 'publishers are receiving less money for every copy sold' (Bhaskar 3) and as a result of this, so are most authors. Economy is a core issue within the industry, and especially big publishers have to become increasingly commercially oriented in order to meet the competition of a global market in which the methods of production and distribution are constantly changing.

Traditionally, publishers would rely on intellectual property rights and the acquisition of a large number of titles, and therefore relied on the strategy that 'misses are offset against hits by building a repertoire' (Hesmondhalgh 31), seeing as a large back-catalogue of titles allowed publishers to publish a large variety of titles and genres, expecting a smaller number of those to become successful enough to cover the losses of any unsuccessful titles. This strategy has been used by, for example, Danish publisher Gyldendal who 'has been able to publish less profitable titles at a loss due to the income from international bestsellers' (Handesten 23). Among these bestsellers are for example the Harry Potter series, which Gyldendal publishes in Danish, and as a result the company can afford to publish a wider variety of genres. For example, they are one of the only Danish publishing houses to publish poetry in print, a genre notoriously known to sell very few copies compared to other genres such as crime fiction or young adult fiction (Handesten 13).

This strategy, however, can be hard to maintain and difficult to make a profit from in the long run, especially for smaller publishers, and the increasing inability to rely solely on this strategy shifts the economical foundation of many publishers. Besides the financial disadvantages there is also the inherent risk to any form of production and subsequent release of cultural goods, seeing as 'there is no firm guarantee that there is actually a market for it out there' (Davies and Sigthorsson 14). This is another key feature of the creative industries and it illustrates the difficulties of navigating the market, since there is no way of knowing for certain what products or books will prove successful. This makes it difficult to publish new authors and often reinforces the production of genre-fiction and the continued publication of big name authors which are guaranteed to sell more copies. That being said, this pattern also in turn underlines the importance of smaller independent publishers, who will publish titles outside of the literary canon and who often place less emphasis on large profit, but instead put their resources towards publishing lesser known genres, translated fiction, female writers, or world literature.

Another effect of the structural changes within the publishing industry is also seen in what Hesmondhalgh refers to as ‘ownership concentration’ (36), where a few major companies or publishers dominate the market, often buying up and integrating smaller companies into their own. The above mentioned Arts Council England report addresses this, explaining that due to consolidation at the top of the market, there are now two major publishers dominating the UK market: ‘a clear Big Two: Penguin Random House (PRH) and the Hachette Group’ (Bhaskar 21). Another example is a major global company like Amazon, who controls the larger part of the sale and distribution of books through cheap online retail and ‘has an integral and powerful position in the book market’ (Bhaskar 32). In terms of circulation and sale, Amazon often makes use of reviews, algorithms and advertising and, while evidently effective, this arguably contributes to an increasingly homogeneous literary culture where a limited number of titles are recommended, promoted and subsequently sold in large numbers. This reinforces and plays into a larger culture of popularised genre fiction and bestseller lists which benefits the handful of publishers who hold the rights to either the book or series, or publish the author exclusively. This reflects badly on the publishing industry in its exclusion of small publishers and more niche titles, seeing as it enables a highly competitive market, making it hard for many authors and publishers to make a living. As such, one of the major issues in the publishing industry in the age of Amazon and online retail is the creation of a homogeneous literary culture that, to return to Hesmondhalgh’s changes in the cultural industries, arguably reinforces processes of conglomeration and integration, as well as the use of new digital platforms. In terms of cultural labour and work within the industry though, it is also a complex issue seeing as this pattern obviously also benefits a handful of authors and offers them an opportunity to break into an industry which is already incredibly gated in many ways.

That being said, there is also a clear tendency indicative of a dynamic industry. While the big publishers grow bigger, there has been a significant rise in the number of smaller independent publishers which illustrates the ability of industry players, whether big or small, to hold their own, be it by assimilation with larger companies or by maintaining an independent literary profile despite a tough market (Handesten 20).

Another major change in publishing and the literary field as a whole has been digitalisation and the shift in the ways in which literature is consumed. Digital publishing and ebooks especially, has posed a significant challenge to traditional print publishing, specifically seeing as these more traditional industries are ‘highly prone to disruption by the introduction of new technologies ...’ (Hesmondhalgh 32). Ebooks not only create a disruption in traditional methods of production, distribution and sale,

reports also show that they are less profitable due to lower sales despite production costs being lower than print (Handstedt 35). That being said, they also present a number of new possibilities for the market, but despite 'a plethora of new publishing and distribution practices' (Flew 165) and the many possibilities such new technologies hold for the industry, implementing them into the industry and into traditional methods of production and distribution at a profit has proven difficult.

Within the context of a modern literary culture, the conditions of the industry, especially in light of economic and structural changes and increasing digitisation, has resulted in a 'consequent emphasis on circulation and on marketing activities' (Hesmondhalgh 34). This emphasis on marketing and circulation is echoed by Davies and Sigthorsson who argue for circulation 'not just as a separate stage that follows the creation of a cultural product ... but also as a form of creative labour in itself, including the creative work that goes into marketing and advertising' (99). The active act of circulating a product introduces the importance of specific sites for engagement with literature and the circulation and promotion of literary products. One such site is the literary festival.

Literary festivals have a number of functions relevant to both the exploration of the creative industries, but also to the implementation of cultural policy, seeing as they 'showcase talented writers, support the local publishing industry, and encourage tourism through a programme of events designed to facilitate cultural engagement, participation, diversity, and community development' (Weber 147). Therefore, they play into a set of requirements articulated by the cultural policy of a given city or region and play a part in reaching the goals set by such a policy, especially when it comes to facilitating greater participation in the local cultural scene, something which will be explored in more detail below.

In terms of economy, such festivals are also often highly beneficial to those working within the literary field, especially for publishers and booksellers who often supplement their primary income by organising debates, readings and various writing or editorial courses at, for example, literary festivals (Handstedt 35). Allan Lillelund Andersen, owner of the Danish micro-publisher Forlaget Silkefyret, explains that he relies on literary festivals and conventions as a platform to not only sell his books, but also as a place where he can expand his network and find potential illustrators and translators and, perhaps most importantly in relation to cultural policy and economy, 'get a foot in with various funds by working more widely across the publishing industry' (Andersen).

In relation to cultural policy, literary festivals are then also highly relevant to explore, seeing as they are often the result of regional or national initiatives to support a specific literary culture or community. Furthermore, they are focused on the creation of a meaningful cultural experience and are key drivers of the active participation in culture, something which has long been a fundamental part

the creation of a democratic cultural policy, and while high citizen participation in culture is still difficult to achieve, it is something which both cultural policies and cultural institutions wish to promote (Eriksson 71).

## **Cultural policy and publishing**

Cultural policy acts as the framework for the ways in which governments support culture and the creative industries through legislation and funding as well as various initiatives to encourage development of creative talent and the production of cultural goods, and UNESCO first defined the purpose of cultural policy as ‘establish[ing] conditions conducive to improving the means for the expression and participation of the population in cultural life’ (Flew 160). In order to understand the impact of cultural policy on the production of cultural goods and on the creative industries, it is important to also understand how and why governments support culture and what both the possibilities and the limits of such policies are. In extension, it is important to be aware of the extent to which cultural policy also depends on the political environment in which it is formulated. This is why, for example, the social welfare policies of most Nordic countries are often reflected in their cultural policies which have a greater focus on research, welfare and education, as opposed to, for example, the more conservative, business-oriented approach in the UK (Birch 43). As such, cultural policy is no longer solely about what gets funded and why but also increasingly about basic values and priorities (Bell and Oakley 41).

Government funding is where the impact of cultural policy is most clearly seen, and it plays a large role in and for the creative industries seeing as policy is what determines how much and to who this funding goes. This, however, also raises the question of on what basis funding is distributed. There has been a shift away from more traditional notions of high and low culture towards an increasingly inclusive definition of culture, but while governments have broadened the slate of cultural activities that receive support, Bell and Oakley argue that ‘the purpose of including certain types of culture and not others remains a highly normative one’ (20). As a result, the support for culture is often rooted in a set of requirements that cultural institutions or events must meet in order to receive funding, and this can lead to a restrictive and at times exclusive policy. These requirements are often financially motivated and thus also illustrates the extent to which cultural policy is also tied to the growth of a global creative economy (Bell and Oakley 40).

Not only does cultural policy aim to support and promote the culture producing industries, it also seeks to strengthen a cultural identity on both a national and regional scale. Within such a

framework, literature is arguably one of the strongest contributors to this identity, and the promotion of a national literary culture has therefore long been both an ideological and nationalistic venture for governments seeking to encourage a sense of cultural achievement and community (Weber 149). The cultural political goals and the motivations behind such a policy are diverse, and aim to further a process of democratisation as well as the access to self-expression through culture, and these are combined with a national policy goal of ‘maintaining a cultural production in the national language, as well as maintaining specific ways of cultural expression’ (Birch 43). Within this need for a diverse production of cultural goods, there is also the need for industries to justify their continued funding. One of the reasons why the state might fund a particular industry is due to its value in terms of a contribution to a national canon, something which literature and publishing adds to greatly.

Considering the impact of growing digitalisation and distribution of cultural goods on a global scale, Terry Flew argues that ‘national media invariably face greater competition in home markets from imported media and cultural products’ (170), but despite concerns over the effects of a global literary market dominated by English-language literature, numbers from the National Book Panel’s yearly report on the state of literature in Denmark suggest that such ‘national media’ is doing well. There has been a rise in the publication of original Danish literature and the production of Danish-language fiction in print has risen with 13% since 2015 and 79% since 2009 (Starup 8). These numbers illustrate the presence of a distinct Danish literary identity, but nevertheless also the continued need to subsidise the industry in order to maintain and encourage this identity and its surrounding community in the face of imported cultural goods.

Through the Ministry of Culture, the state supports the publishing industry and the production of literature in a number of ways, with the Danish Arts Foundation acting as the foundation of the country’s cultural policy in terms of funding. The aim of the foundation is to support and fund ‘the production and promotion of both visual arts, film, literature, music, performing arts, architecture, crafts, and design – and all that transcends the borders of these art forms’ (“About Us”). The foundation also operates by what is referred to as the arm's-length principle, something which is fundamental to Danish cultural policy, meaning that neither the ministry nor any individual policymaker is directly involved in the allocation of funds, thus limiting the extent to which support is influenced by a given political agenda. Within the literary field, deciding what projects and organisations receive funding from the foundation falls to the Committee for Literary Project Funding, whose primary function is to ‘strengthen the promotion of Danish literature and the access to literary experiences on a national scale’ (“About Us”). The committee distributes up to 50 million DKK

annually through various grants awarded to publishers, authors, illustrators and translators, as well as specific funds for the translation of literature to and from Danish, and events promoting Danish literature.

Within the context of a national cultural policy it is also important to consider the cultural policy of individual cities, seeing as they are where ‘cultural policies become visible’ (Bell and Oakley 101). Aarhus is an excellent example of this and the vision for the city's cultural policy is ‘Aarhus - an international city where culture sets the agenda’ (“Cultural Policy 2017- 2020” 4). One of the main goals of the city’s cultural policy is to ‘[direct focus] to accessibility in the widest sense, so that art and culture will reach as many people as possible’ (“Cultural Policy 2017-2020” 4) and especially such a sentiment reflects the basis on which many local events like LiteratureXchange receive funding, which is due to their ability to attract a more diverse audience. In addition, it is necessary to also consider the importance of Aarhus as European Capital of Culture 2017, seeing as LiteratureXchange was first held the following year and can be seen as a product of the cultural initiatives established in its wake. The ECOC nomination has been a vital part of the formation of a distinct cultural identity in Aarhus, and in relation to economic growth the cultivation of such an identity is important seeing as ‘cities go to great lengths ... to brand themselves as destinations for cultural tourism’ (Davies and Sigthorsson 3), something which the Aarhus 2017 event contributed to greatly. The more successful this branding is, the more of a positive effect it has on both the cultural and economic growth of a region, and cultural events like LiteratureXchange play a vital role in this international branding.

## **LiteratureXchange**

LiteratureXchange is an annual international literary festival organised by Aarhus Centre for Literature, Aarhus Public Libraries and the People’s University Aarhus. It has taken place in the city since 2018 and presents Danish as well as international authors in addition to readings, debates and talks between researchers, translators and authors on a diverse range of topics relevant to both the local literary scene and a broader international context. LiteratureXchange seeks to utilize the city of Aarhus as an innovative space in which to explore both literature as well as the various cultural institutions in the city, something which is done through up to 150 events spanning from literary dinners and city-walks, to traditional readings and debates (“Generelt”).

The festival also places much emphasis on being a multicultural festival, and demonstrates how cities have increasingly been seen not only as cultural spaces, but as ‘sites for the incubation of new ideas, bringing together people from diverse cultures and backgrounds’ (Flew 138). The cultural policy



of Aarhus also echoes this in its goal to create a distinct cultural identity for the city, which not only promotes Aarhus as an international cultural hub but also ‘helps build bridges between different environments and nationalities, and ... open our eyes, giving us new knowledge and inspiration as well as creating new communities’ (“Cultural Policy 2017-2020” 20). These policy goals are also important in the sense that they act as a framework for the festival in the creation of the programme and the overall goals of LiteratureXchange. Noa Kjærsgaard Hansen, head of communications at LiteratureXchange, acknowledges this as he describes the main goal of the festival as ‘creating an international festival that brings people together, across borders, across ages, gender, religion, political ideas etc.’ (Hansen), which in turn also demonstrates the ability of literary festivals to engage ‘a diverse range of individuals and promote their participation in and enjoyment of literary culture’ (Weber 170).

Cultural policy, then, affects LiteratureXchange in a number of ways, seeing as the festival ‘relies on the cultural policy of Aarhus and was born out of the Capital of Culture and every year seeks to navigate the festival towards political interests to make sure that it has financial support further on’ (Hansen). This demonstrates the extent to which cultural events has to keep policy in mind as they are created, due to the large impact that cultural policy has on funding. It also illustrates a more problematic aspect of cultural policy and echoes Bell and Oakley’s claim that the ways in which funding is distributed is still somewhat selective and reinforces a normative system of values. Noa Hansen makes it clear, however, that this need to adapt the festival to political interests also has positive effects, seeing as it ‘creates an interesting framework for the festival when it comes to themes and topics’ (Hansen).

The work to accommodate local policy also facilitates growing collaboration across different sectors and between local business and organisations, and the cultural policy of Aarhus describes how ‘regional and international collaborative relations and partnerships across culture, business, tourism, education and other sectors are to be maintained and expanded as a natural platform for the development that contributes to strengthening cultural life, financial sustainability and growth’ (“Cultural Policy 2017-2020” 12). LiteratureXchange contributes to this especially in its collaboration with local independent bookstore Kristian F. Møller, with whom LiteratureXchange has a ‘tight bond when it comes to advertisement, planning and events, and Hansen explains that the store can ‘tell us exactly who sells and who doesn’t and we make sure to invite authors where they will benefit commercially from their visits’ (Hansen), something which also illustrates how this is a beneficial deal for them both and thus engages and benefits other local businesses as well.

In terms of concrete financial support, LiteratureXchange has been supported substantially by Aarhus Municipality all three years, and in 2020 the festival received 100.000 DKK from the

municipality for the promotion of cultural events (Hansen). However, such support is subject to negotiations that will determine whether or not the city will continue to support the festival and this underlines the, at times, unpredictable circumstances cultural organisations must navigate in order to receive funding. As such, it is important to create a link between a cultural event, local policy, and the values that it represents by ‘dra[w]ing together technological, economic, and cultural imperatives to create an economic rationale for policy and funding that encourages the support of cultural and social projects’ (Weber 147). Furthermore, this plays into the above mentioned changes to the cultural industries outlined by Hesmondhalgh by illustrating not only the growing importance of cultural policy on cultural industries, but also the extent to which the industries ‘have become more and more significant in local and urban social policy as a means of regenerating economies and providing a competitive advantage over other cities and regions’ (Hesmondhalgh 5), seeing as literary events also act a way of drawing businesses to the city.

Even with government support however, Noa Hansen explains that the festival spends most of its resources on fundraising and that ‘even with a grant from Aarhus Kommune it is difficult to make it work when it comes to an international festival that must transport people from all over the world - and host them’ (Hansen), and this offers an insight into the financial structure and struggle of an international literary festival. This is why LiteratureXchange also has to rely heavily on private funding, and as of 2020 had six different private sponsors, among them, Koda Kultur, Jorck’s Fond, Aage og Johanne Louis-Hansens Fond and S. C. Van Fonden (“Generelt”). Besides support from public and private funds, the festival also relies on income generated from entrance fees which ‘count for a great deal too’ but the festival nevertheless aims to keep prices low and Noa explains that they ‘can’t control exactly how much [they] get from there’ (Hansen), something which also demonstrates the at times unstable nature of the experience economy and the financial foundation of cultural events.

## **Creative labour and the literary field**

The exploration of creative labour and the working conditions for those within the creative industries offers valuable insight into both how cultural products are made and circulated, but also how creative workers navigate the challenges of their particular industries. Especially young people are increasingly entering the creative workforce when they graduate and many gravitate towards work in creative industries such as film and TV, music or publishing and writing. While the reasoning for this often lies in the advantages of flexible hours and more creative freedom, these are also often what have ‘made work in the cultural industries increasingly insecure (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 11). The literary field

is no exception and an exploration of both the work of aspiring authors as well as work within literary events such as LiteratureXchange demonstrates the working conditions in the literary industry.

In their exploration of the motivations for building a career in these industries, Hesmondhalgh and Baker have argued for a model of good and bad work in order to understand the working conditions of the creative industries, and what they understand as good work includes ‘autonomy, interest and involvement, sociality, self-esteem, self-realisation, work-life balance and security’ (Hesmondhalgh and Baker *Creative Labour* 36). Noa Hansen from LiteratureXchange touches on some of these aspects of his work in the field, and when asked whether his motivation for working with the festival was based on personal interest or more practical reasons such as networking or self-promotion, he explained that ‘I guess it is a bit of both. I’ve personally studied literature so in that sense it is of course a personal interest. But I’m also interested in the more organisational and administrative aspects of it. As well as expanding my network and just in general getting better at what I do. It walks hand in hand!’ (Hansen). As such, he demonstrates what Hesmondhalgh and Baker call ‘good work’ in his emphasis on personal interest as well as a sense of achievement and growth within his job at the festival. A big part of successfully working in the creative industries is based on the ability to create and cultivate a network of connections, and the experiences of creative workers underline the importance of networks within the creative industries, and Bandinelli and Gandini explain that there is often a connection between creative spaces that function as cultural and creative hubs, such as Aarhus or London, and the ability and possibility of networking (90). As such, Noa’s work with an international literary festival increases his ability to be a part of a creative hub and also demonstrates the growing importance of cities and urban spaces as cultural sites.

Turning to work in publishing, the above mentioned Arts Council England report lays out a number of crucial findings regarding work within publishing and as an author, but it should be noted that these may not be directly applicable to the Danish publishing industry and work within the literary field in Denmark, since, as Birch argues, the welfare policies and flexible labour market of the Scandinavian countries is arguably better suited for creative industries, as opposed to the UK where cultural and creative workers might experience a greater sense of precarity and lack of social security (Birch 52). Nevertheless, the findings of the report highlight some of the overall challenges and internalised issues in the industry and address how they might be resolved.

Their research shows that entering the literary field in the UK is especially difficult due to low pay and the heavy reliance on insider networks that often consist of workers of the same socioeconomic and ethnic background, that favours members of white, middle-class backgrounds

(Bhaskar 36). This further illustrates the above mentioned reliance on networking and underlines the ‘role of personal contacts and social networks in the knowledge and creative economy’ (Bandinelli and Gandini 93) on the whole. A related issue is that of advances, something which most authors rely heavily on as a source of income while writing, but which have decreased significantly, with one respondent describing how ‘they used to receive advances of above £50,000 for a book, now down to £5,000’ (Bhaskar 39). Such conditions in turn demonstrates what Hesmondhalgh and Baker would classify as bad work.

Festivals and literary events can be highly beneficial and fit well within a modern literary culture, but they unfortunately also reinforce some of the issues mentioned above. There has in recent years been some controversy surrounding the pay, or lack of, offered to authors who appear at literary festivals. An example of this controversy was the Oxford Literary Festival, from which author Phillip Pullman resigned as a patron, after it was revealed that the majority of authors were ‘speak[ing] at the festival for free when most events came with a £10-12 ticket price’, and while most were not paid to appear ‘some [were] apparently earning fees of up to £3,000 for an appearance’ (Bhaskar 45). It demonstrates an obvious issue with the economic structure of the event and with the biased treatment of authors depending on popularity. Furthermore, this incident is indicative of larger issues facing many workers in the creative industries, especially young or inexperienced, who are often forced to work in less than ideal conditions and for little profit in order to build networks and break into more gated communities.

Even though issues like this contribute to making publishing and the literary field a highly gated community, the Arts Council England survey also underlines the possibilities in ‘opening up the insider networks of writers, agents, publishers, reviewers and commentators around literary fiction’ (Bhaskar 37), something which LiteratureXchange also tries to do, as they promote local Danish artists as part of their programme and explain that the festival strives to act as ‘a platform, where the Danish audience can get to know the next great author – maybe they are intrigued by the theme, the format or the discussion partner’ (Hansen). Here is also where small independent publishing houses can help tip the scales. Charlotte Jørgensen, editor for Danish publisher C&K, explains that smaller publishers often act as stepping stones for aspiring authors, as they have a better chance of getting picked up by one of the major publishing houses after having first been signed to a smaller publisher where they can develop their talent (Handesten 36). This kind of emphasis on talent-development, and in extension, the importance of opening up insider networks, is crucial to the larger understanding of the influence of cultural policy on the creative industries. The work done by publishers and literary festivals

encourages and highlights the specific skills, innovative mindset and value of workers in the creative industries, which in turn makes it easier to justify a policy that uses public support to fund and further the industries and those working within them (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 18).

While the publishing industry and the literary field then faces a number of challenges and changes in a constantly evolving market under the effects of globalisation and digitalisation, these changes are also introducing new solutions and new opportunities within the creative industries. Within this framework, the ability and responsibility of cultural policy to encourage and support the creative industries is more important than ever, and the visions of both national and regional policies illustrate the value of culture and the importance of continuously furthering the participation in and accessibility of culture and the arts. Literary festivals, in their structure and their visions, arguably highlight a number of these changes and challenges, but are also part of the solution, and demonstrate a forward thinking literary culture where the introduction of new technologies and altered modes of production and circulation can allow for new forms of writing, a greater diversity within the field and, importantly, new ways of funding and supporting the industry and those within it.

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