1. Introduction

Decades ago, cultural organisations were content to reach a small, narrow and self-selected audience. Since the late 1990s, however, they are not only reaching out to larger audiences, but also building demand among new groups. In addition, cultural organisations are proactively designing services and offerings which will generate satisfaction and positive outcomes for all their visitors (Kotler and Kotler, 1998, 2000). One of the main aims of present-day cultural organisations, however, remains the same: to attract larger and more diversified audiences. What, though, can be defined as a cultural organisation? A cultural organisation is an establishment (not necessarily a building), founded with a clear artistic purpose, and with the goal of becoming a permanent part of the community and its members' lives (Brooks Hopkins, 1997; Kolb, 2005).

Today, cultural organisations continue facing four key practical marketing challenges: 1) most importantly, how to maintain a necessary level of fund raising; 2) how to attract larger and more diversified audiences; 3) how to retain existing audiences; 4) and finally, how to maintain the balance between educational and entertainment purposes (Alcalde & Rueda, 2007; Capriotti, 2009; Cole, 2008; Dubinsky, 2007; Kolb, 2005; McPherson, 2006). Governments require value for money in terms of public service from their museums. Current definitions of this revolve around increasing visitor numbers (net increases, reflecting year-on-year growth), and attracting as representative a cross-section of the public as can be achieved (Cole, 2008). To be well-intentioned and functioning is no longer considered a sufficient reason for continued government support. Marketing is no longer an option; it is now a survival tool for cultural institutions (Cole, 2008; Rentschler, 2007).

In this paper we set arts marketing in a context whereby we conceptualise a potential key consumer – millennial cultural consumers – and conceptualise brand communities as possible means to attract and reach them. We provide 4 research propositions for further work by academics and/or practitioners, along with a proposal for management action. Attracting young audiences is of course a key challenge of present-day cultural institutions. According to Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2013b:1) one of the key conditions

and matters when providing National Lottery grants is the attraction of children and young people, "the need to inspire their interest and involvement in the arts".

Nationally, such visual arts cultural organisations as museums and galleries have a fairly older visitor profile compared to the population age spread as a whole. For example, in 2003-2004 and 2005 young people (aged 16-24, statistical age used by Department for Culture, Media and Sport) made up only 11% of visitors in museums of England, although they were making up a total of 14% and 15% of England's population (Arts Council England, 2006). In 2005-2006, only 38% of UK national population aged 16-24 attended at least one museum or gallery. This number is smaller than among other age groups: aged 25-44 (48%), 45-64 (48%), and 65-74 age group (40%) (MLA Council, 2006). In 2009-2010 young adults have again made up a smallest group of visitors (with an exception of 75+ age group): only 36.7 % of young people have visited a museum or a gallery during those years (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2010). The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2013a) also states that compared to 2011/2012, the proportion who visited a museum or gallery in the year ending March 2013 increased amongst all demographic groups, with the only exception being the 16-24 young people group. These examples of national statistics confirm that young audience attraction remains a key marking challenge for cultural organisations.

Although some cultural organisations appear to have a "healthy" young audience, if organised school/college/university groups are taken out of the equation, it is possible to see that they still do not attract many young visitors (Mason and McCarthy, 2006). Surveys of the literature focusing on the youth and art museums suggest that they consistently make up a small percentage of visitors overall, and, therefore, some immediate actions should be undertaken by cultural organisations' professionals (Australian Museums Online, 2005; Xanthoudaki, 1998). Indeed, many young people aged 16-24 are still ranking the attraction of a visit to a museum or a gallery much lower than any other free time activities.

2. Key Issue

The issue of young audience attraction has been challenging arts institutions for years. Who are these present-day young people, and what are their motives of attendance? Mason and McCarthy (2006) for example, suggest that cultural institutions make young visitors feel that they do not belong to the world of art. Most young people see art as something remote and institutional, something that is set apart from their common, everyday culture and fun (Willis *et al.,* 1990). Some young people hold an opinion that museums and art galleries are dull, and even boring uncomfortable (Arts Council England, 2006; Bartlett and Kelly, 2000). Also, they are unlikely to visit if being patronised by the elders or educational institutions, and they can be difficult to engage via traditional marketing strategies (Briggs, 2007). To attract and retain young visitors, it is necessary to deepen understanding of their motives when attending and how can they possibly get more engaged with cultural organisations. To assist and provide a foundation for any managerial or practical empirical work we provide a review of the relevant literature in order to conceptualise potential key consumers and strategies. Throughout the following review and commentary we will therefore derive research propositions and management implicatons to guide researchers and practitioners.

3. The "Millennial Cultural Consumer"

Our key contribution is the conceptualization: "the millennial cultural consumer." To answer the question addressed above of who are the today's young visitors of the arts institution and what their motives of attendance are, it is necessary to examine the motives of consumption of the present-day young people (the Millennials aged 18-25) and current cultural consumers' attendance motives. Two important key factors to attracting and building a relationship between companies and current generation of young people are: the understanding and responding to their needs and values. However, who exactly are these young people of the current generation? Scholars as well as the industry professionals both agree to call them the "Millennials" or the Generation Y (Drake-Bridges & Burgess, 2010; Noble et al, 2009; Smith, 2012; Valentine & Powers, 2013). Millennials can be identified as the present-day young people, who were born from 1980s till mid-1990s, although the

exact dates may vary among researchers (Valentine & Powers, 2013). For example, according to Valentine & Powers (2013) Millennials were born between 1977 and 1996, and are now between 18 to 37 years old. Solka et al (2011) state that Millennials were born between 1981 and 1995. Other authors would identify the years when Gen Y were born as between 1977 (1979) and 1994 (Neuborne, 1999, Williams & Page, 2011). However, this research tends to generalise age borders, and considers that in 2014 Millennials are aged between 18 and 35 years old. This is done to cross-match Millennials age range with young adults visitors age. Although Wesner and Miller (2008) state that Boomers and Millennials have much in common, they would still vary in their characteristics and values. Millenials were raised and being continuously told that they are "special", and that they can be anything they want to be (Morley Safer, 2008). What, though, are the key characteristics of the Generation Y?

Gen Y is a unique and influential consumer group whose behaviour is very often discussed but not fully understood (Drake-Bridges & Burgess, 2010; Noble et al, 2009; Smith, 2012). They have grown up in a media-saturated and brand-conscious world, so are reported to be very market savvy, especially when it comes to brands and value (Nowak *et al*., 2006; Valentine & Powers, 2013). Therefore, new marketing strategies should be carefully developed and implemented to reach this large and affluent segment. They also are very technology savvy, as most have grown-up with the Internet, and now use it as their primary search of products/services and information (Moriarty, 2004; Wolburg & Pokrywczynski, 2001). That is why Internet social networks and virtual communities should be taken in the consideration when developing a marketing product.

Finally, they are not only giving a key influence to their friends or other Millennials, but influence their families too. Therefore, it is of high importance to have a great understanding of their needs and motives, as the "marketers who don't bother to learn the interests and obsessions of Gen Y are apt to run against a brick wall of distrust and cynicism" (Neubourne, 1999 p.4). The key motives of the Generation Y when consuming include: 1) Intimacy/New relationships; 2) Awareness/Self-Actualization; 3) Balance in work-life or education-entertainment (Anonymous, 2009; Dickey & Sullivan, 2007;

Donnelly, 2008; Pesquera, 2004; Sisk, 2010; Valentine & Powers, 2013; Williams & Page, 2011; Wolfe, 2004)

- *Intimacy/New relationship*: The ability to establish and sustain new relationships over the internet but it is much more difficult for them to establish them in reality. Although they belong to a world of the Internet, they continue to highly value personal connections and emotions.

- *Awareness/Self-actualization*: They like to be aware of social or any other issues/information. This generation also includes very optimistic nature and a belief that they are special and can make a difference in the world.

- *Balance in work-life/education-entertainment*: Although Millennials are a very hard-working generation and it is important for them to be developing and self-actualising, they also tend to believe that life should be fun and entertaining.

To conceptualise a segment of millennial cultural consumers we need not only to understand Generation Y (as above), but current cultural consumers. The literature on customer attendance of arts institutions gives various possible motivations. For example, Jansen-Verbeke and Van Rekon (1996) have identified the key motives, such as: to be given food for thought, to learn something, to enrich your life, to experience different quality of life, to see things in another perspectives/to see something new, to watch works of art, to relax/have fun. Kolb (2005), however, is forming all the motives identified by different scholars into four different broad categories: interest in a particular art form or artist, desire for leisure/entertainment, participation in social ritual, and self-improvement. Mastandrea *et al.* (2009), have identified quite similar motives: the interest for the artist/s, the desire of cultural enrichment, to see the artworks in the original, the pleasure that the visitor feels during the visit. The last motive takes us to more emotional motives in attending a museum or an art gallery. The key emotions have been identified by Mastandrea *at al*. (2009): interest, aesthetic enjoyment, pleasure, wellbeing, fun, amazement, excitement, melancholy, anxiety, boredom. One of the other key motives, which is not mentioned by Kolb (2005), Mastandrea *et al.* (2009) and Jansen-Verbeke and Van Rekon (1996) is the ability to meet new people, from inside or outside of their circle of interests, geographic areas, social layers and so on.

In this way we have identified through conceptualisation a new potential segment of cultural consumers – the "Millenial Cultural Consumers", which represent current present-day cultural consumers aged 18-25. To create this concept we noted overlapping motives: intimacy/new relationship - to meet new people motive, awareness/self-actualisation - to be given food for thought/to learn something, balance in work-life/education-entertainment - to relax/have fun.

4. Value co-creation and the consumer experience

According to Cova and Dalli (2009), marketing-oriented literature of the last decade reveals that the consumer's role is increasingly changing, and consumer market experiences and relationships with companies are becoming more interactive and constructive. Early marketing studies focused on the rational choices/needs of consumers, and, later, on the so-called information processing model (Bettman, 1979; Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982 p.132; Howard and Sheth, 1969). Since then, the researchers point of view has shifted, looking beyond simple consumption model of rational choice, towards more playful leisure activities, sensory pleasures, daydreams, aesthetic enjoyment, and emotional responses. Already several decades ago consumption was seen as involving a steady flow of fantasies, feelings, and fun encompassed by what is called the experiential view (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982: 132). According to scholars, the experiential perspective explores the symbolic meanings of more subjective characteristics (cheerfulness, sociability) (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Levy 1959). This marketing paradigm is particularly suited to the arts product, and provides interesting, creative new opportunities for the more successful promotion of the arts "experience" at museums and galleries. It is noteworthy how fitting this is to the concerns of Generation Y.

Value creation is a process through which the user becomes better in some respect or which increases the user's well-being (Gronroos, 2008; Vargo et al., 2008). We find that this fits well with the Millennials' concern for balance. For consumers of cultural organisations, value can be defined as the experience (emotions, feelings, memories, relationships, self-development) gained from the visit and the use of services (Gronroos, 2008; Kolb, 2005; Kotler and Kotler, 2000, Vargo *et al.,* 2008). Noting Millennials key needs, it is then

possible to conclude that value for a Millennial Cultural Consumer can be defined as an experience, gained from the visit and use of services satisfying their emotional, relational, entertaining and self-development needs (See Conclusion, Proposition 1). Who, though, creates the value? For example, Vargo and Lusch (2004) state that both the consumer and the provider are co-creators of value. Lusch *et al.* (2010) also state that the firm can only make and follow through on value propositions rather than create actual value without consumer being involved in the process. Gronroos (2008) presents the two facets of value creation: the consumer and the provider service logic. Customer service logic is a process whereby, when using resources provided by a firm together with other resources and applying skills held by them, customers create value in everyday practice. Provider service logic, however, is the process when, by creating interactive contacts and relationships with customers during their use of goods and services, the firm develops opportunities to co-create value *with* them and *for* them (Gronroos, 2008). In their later papers, Vargo and Lusch (2008) state that these two logics can be united as, according to the authors, the consumer is always a value creator; however, the provider is only a co-creator and acts as an additional tool to help create the value. For arts organisations, the product design should therefore carefully consider this balance of the consumer and the provider service logic in creating value (e.g. experience), and enable the visitor to contribute to this process and emerge fulfilled. It is especially important to enable the present-day young visitors to contribute to the process of value co-creation. The statistical data collected by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport shows that today's young people are much more

likely participate in cultural organisations' activities, rather than just attend museums and galleries. Therefore, their involvement in value (experience) co-creation process an be seen as a potential tool for cultural organisations to attract and engage young visitors (See Conclusion, Proposition 3)**.**

5. Imagined Communities, Community and Brand Communities

Generally, communities describe a phenomena, where people gather regularly and to share a particular interest (Rothaermel and Sugiyama, 2001). Imagined communities take place in the human mind. What enables human community is the "exchange of meaning in a community of minds motivated to transform reality together" (Trevarthen, 1990, p.689). This fits with the

millennials' concern for balance, as noted earlier in this paper. Being in community, be it imagined, virtual or in physical space and time, contributes to human well-being. For humans to be fully human Buber, a Hasidic Jew writes that a wholly satisfying answer can only be found when one meets another, without using 'the other' as an instrument for self-fulfilment (1937).

Community, then, is an aspect of humanity that both embodies yearnings for meaning and transcendence and has a role in gelling society. Augustine wrote of the universal community as a communion with the sacred (Augustine, 397/1991); in Islam the umma also transcends immediate context and geography (Al Bayati, 1983). Is community longed for? Yes. Life without community is experienced by weak and strong alike as "often dissatisfying and on occasion, frightening" (Bauman, 2001, p.60). Is there a unitary response that will satisfy this longing? No. For as the contemporary philosopher, John Gray, writes, now "we are none of us defined by membership in a single community or form of moral life" for "the power to conceive of ourselves in different ways, to harbour dissonant projects…is integral to our identity as reflective beings" (Gray, 1993, p. 262-3). So what possibilities for community are current today? The expectation of frequent and intense interaction with the same set of people, in a community is no longer present (Bauman, 2001). Schmalenbach (1922) wrote of groups of the like-minded forming communities, although in the context of sociological discussions of community he chose to frame these as "communions" (cited in Delanty, 2009, p.30) due to the focus on shared emotional experiences. "This approach to community is particularly relevant to an understanding of more fluid and, also, festive expressions of community"(pp. 30-31).

Marketing and branding has a role in this social sphere since the human relational capacity, evident from birth, is what has been used for all forms of community, including the recent emphasis in marketing on brand community:

"Brand communities and other social aggregations of empowered consumers are not going away. In fact society's need for trust and security have rarely been more profound. This provides us with heretofore unknown research opportunities. But this requires new thinking and conceptualizations." (O'Guinn and Muniz, 2005, p. 270)

These communities are to be "festively and joyfully consumed" (Delanty, 2009, p.70) - surely here there is both licence and encouragement to market consumption experiences. Our era of choice rather than overt coercion or fixed status quo gives space for marketers. Here is a space for arts marketers to contribute to what must be a variety of responses to this longing for community. This is a place for the marketer to respond to demand. This broadens the context in which arts marketing takes place and gives it a more secure place in the social fabric of our culture (O'Reilly 2005).

Bauman writes that in all communities "all unity needs to be made" (2001, p.14) (and this frees marketers from worry that the essential artificiality of brand community renders it somehow less worthwhile than other forms of community). Viewed this way, then, communities can be seen as discursively constructed (Delanty, 2009) which again very clearly provided the foundation for marketers constructing brand communities, since brands are part of the marketing communications toolkit and beyond that are part of everyday 21st century life. This may be thin community rather than the thick, traditional and traditioned form, but it is core to what it is to be human, currently. "Under the conditions of modernity, the resulting commonality that emerges from discursive communities is often a fragile kind of belonging" (Delanty, 2009, p. xiii). Boorstin wrote perhaps the first discursive connection in terms of consumer communities in 1974. This kind of belonging in community fits well into a virtual world and explains the success of social networking now that Web 2.0 enables such community construction.

So, today, there are countless definitions of communities. A number of various brand communities definitions is presented in current brand communities literature, and can most of the times be identified as with more descriptive than definitive focus. Some of the definitions are presented in the table below (see Table 1).

Author(s)	Year	Definition
Fournier & Lee	2009	A group of ardent consumers organized around the lifestyle, activities, and ethos of the brand.
Muniz & O'Guinn	2001	A specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of the brand.
McAlexander, Schouten & Koenig	2002	A group of member entities, with relationships among them...brought together by a brand or consumption activities...and desire to contribute in company's success.
Boorstin	1974	Invisible new communities...created and preserved by how and what men consumed.

Table 1. Definition of Brand Communities by topic key authors.

Research on consumption and Brand Communities identifies several dimensions on which they differ. The dimensions include: geographic concentration, social context and temporality. Considering different authors' definitions of brand communities and different dimensions on which brand communities can differ, we have have defined a Brand Community for Millennial Cultural Consumer: a non-geographically bounded online (internet spaced) or/and and offline (face-to-face with personal contact) temporary or stable community with more or less structured relations between its members, brought together by a brand (or its consumption activity) and community members' needs (Arnould and Price, 1993; Boostin, 1974; Fisher, Bristor and Gainer, 1996; Granitz and Ward, 1996; Holt, 1995; Kozinets, 1997; McGrath, Sherry and Heisley, 1993; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995; Tambyah, 1996).

Marketing practitioners may forget that consumers are actual people, with many different needs, interests and values, which is why we have constructed the concept "millennial cultural consumer" with homogeneous needs and motivations. The needs and values of a

community can actually give rise to a brand. For example, the brand community can actually grow not from a need to express a shared identity but from a desire to meet members' specialized needs (Fournier and Lee, 2009). However, the needs that brand communities can satisfy are not just about gaining status or trying on a new identity through brand affiliation. People participate in communities for a wide variety of reasons, such as emotional support, cultivate interest and skills, encouragement, and so on. What are the motives of present-day members of brand communities of cultural organisations? Baumgarth and Kaluza (2012) in their paper suggest that Friends Groups are a classical instrument in the arts and cultural sector, and analyse them from the brand community point of view. Authors also identify common motives, which drive members of the Friends Groups and Brand Communities members. We have then noted an important overlap of these motives with Millennial Cultural Consumers' attendance motives, which is presented below 9see proposition 2b for managerial implication):

- *Social interaction and belonging:* Can be identified as a central driver, and includes the feeling of belonging, desire for recognition and social interaction (Bhattacharya *et al*., 1995; Mc Alexander *et al*, 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Slater and Armstrong, 2010; 2011). For present-day young people, this motive can be called as one of the key ones. They join communities/societies to build new relationships, as sometimes it can be hard for young people to do so outside of the virtual world (Fournier and Lee, 2009).

- *Entertainment and experience:* Brand communities build shared rituals through such activities as parties, gatherings and shared consumption activities. Friends/Members groups of cultural institutions involve their members into similar entertaining activities (Bhattacharya *et al*., 1995; Mc Alexander *et al*, 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Slater and Armstrong, 2010; 2011). This motive is highly related to an Awareness/Self-actualization motive, as well as Balance in work-life/education-entertainment motive of the Millennials' consumption. Also, this motive can help cultural organisations practitioners with one of the current issues: how to maintain the balance between education and entertainment, and a need to involve entertainment into marketing activity.

- *Self-development/self-actualization:* This motive includes individual education, the development of interests and knowledge, as well as an ability to contribute to a greater

whole (Baumgarth and Kaluza, 2012; Fournier and Lee, 2009). This motive is closely related to edutainment challenge of cultural institutions, and how to persuade customers (especially young audiences) to visit in educational purposes. It also builds an important part in present-day young people motivation when they consume (Awareness/Self-actualization).

- *Prestige:* This motive is closely related to the personal status of the visitor. The main driver is the possibility to belong or participate in the activities of cultural organisations with good reputation (Bhattacharya *et al*., 1995; Mc Alexander *et al*, 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Slater and Armstrong, 2010; 2011). This driver is very important among young audiences, as it can directly affect young people's success in existing relationships, as well as the ability to build new relationships. However, it does not directly relate to today's young people, as they already tend to feel "special" and important without a need to use the organisation's reputation.

It is also important to mention, that members of brand communities are most likely to collaborate in order to gain access to the resources and skills they need to accomplish their goals. As it has already been discussed above, several social context dimensions have been identified in literature, including three forms of Brand Communities affiliation presented by Fournier and Lee (2009), such as: 1) *Pools* - strong association with shared activity, values or goals, but loose association with one another; 2) *Webs* - strong one-to-one relationships with other members as well as the brand itself; 3) and, finally, *Hubs* - strong connections to a central figure, but weaker associations with one another. **A**uthors state that Webs are the strongest and the most stable forms of community, and are based on strong one-to-one connection (Fournier and Lee, 2009). This form can be called ideal for brand communities, which contain young people. However, today's young people tend to form Hubs, sometimes Pools, and much more rarely Webs.

Consumers are deemed to act in various ways (Healy and McDonagh, 2013). Members of strong brand communities stay involved, and add value by playing a wide variety of roles, such as: Mentor, Learner, Back-Up, Partner, Storyteller, Decision Maker, Hero, Ambassador, and so on (Fournier and Lee, 2009). In designing a new community or strengthening an

existing one, companies should incorporate as assortment of roles into the community structure, and also help members take on new roles, as their needs change (Fournier and Lee, 2009). Healy and McDonagh (2013), however, identify slightly different consumer community cultural co-creative roles: Voice, Loyalty, Exit, Twist, Entry, Non-entry, Re-entry. Brand communities not only provide companies with additional marketing communication channel, but also enable companies to generate consumer loyalty, lower marketing costs, as well as co-create value. The organisations' benefits also include potential cross-sell, stronger relationships between the organisation and the visitors, volunteerism and an ability to "capture" young people for life.

Brand communities can act as a starting point of a so-called "Snowball Effect" in visitors retention: a snowball does not randomly accumulate snowflakes in the area; as well as people are not independent actors. They affect each other in their behaviour (Krackhardt and Porter, 1986). The degree to which they affect each other depends on the intensity of the relationships between them. Therefore, when building a brand community it is important to carefully design it and manage the relationships, as well as archetypes of its members. The increase in the globalisation of the world's economies, together with the rise of the internet have given new opportunities, as well as emerged new challenges for marketing brands and products. Organisations have increasingly realized that with the access to the Internet they can overcome the time and space constraints (Andersen, 2005). However, consumers are becoming overwhelmed by marketers' attempts to communicate with them and to engage them in stronger relationships; only recently, consumers have started using the internet to communicate with each other (Goldsmith and Horowitz, 2006; Sicilia and Palazon, 2008). Today, online social networks continue to get a more of a buzz, and more and more companies try not to miss out on new opportunities in the virtual world. According to Fournier and Lee (2009), online social networks can serve some valuable brand community functions: help people to overcome such aspects as geographical distance and time difference, to help people to create new relationships, serendipitous connections and new ideas. Given the continuous increase in the use of Internet and social networks among young people, it is important to keep the organisation's marketing activity up to date and not to ignore the potential importance of the virtual brand communities in attraction and retention of young audiences. However, even a well-crafted virtual community has its limitations, and

physical spaces still play an important role in fostering community connections. Also, considering the importance of the personal contact among Millennials, it is suggested that a virtual brand community can be used as an important, but only initial tool of present-day young audience attraction. Knowing that the Generation Y young people are very loyal and trusting to their own closely-guarded personal networks, and less consistent and reliable to brands and employers, marketers should consider brand communities and relationships between their members as an important tool of influence on its members. A paper that does directly address the ineffable is by Schouten *et al.* (2007) and it is noteworthy that it has not resulted in a slew of articles developing transcendent consumer experiences (TCEs). This gap could usefully be filled by further research into TCEs. – possibly derive a research proposition here. They locate transcendence in the extraordinary, and build on Arnould and Price's seminal work on white water rafting (1993) and find that there is huge potential for marketer facilitated TCEs. We see another application of this in co-creation of arts experiences. To support this from theory we draw attention to the salience of the top of the Maslow pyramid in advanced economies (1943). Once a culture has met the lower needs at the base of the triangle – for food and shelter, for sociability and success, for significance then what remains to be met is the desire for transcendence. This is a foundation for focusing on marketing the transcendent through arts consumption (See Conclusion, proposition 3).

6.   Dialogical communication to create meaning

There is a perspective on branding both fits our focus on millennial cultural consumers and fits a focus on consumers' articulation of personal creation of meaning (Fournier 1998; Halliday and Trott 2010; Thompson and Haytko 1997). The context for arts marketing is, as with all marketing, in an understanding of the empirical world as culturally constituted, as "the world of everyday experiences in which the phenomenal world presents itself to the individual's senses fully shaped and constituted by the beliefs and assumptions of his/her culture" (McCracken 1986 p.72). The service offering exchange in arts marketing is an opportunity to create a relationship since mutual identification is important to millennials.

They are seeking meaning and affirmation of their personal values, by sharing them with the organisations from which they purchase. But how fixed or univocal and passive is this meaning? There was a time when identity was seen as fairly static rather than a process of construction. Or is is it interactive and dynamic? We believe that even after 20 years McCracken's challenge for the present research agenda is to accept that meaning is not created from serial monologues, but rather from a developing dialogue.

Persons create personal identity which "does not reflect a stable set of essential features, but is negotiated in a dynamic field of social relations" (Thompson and Haytko, 1997 p.21)? This dynamic can be termed dialogical, which embraces the co-creative aspect that gives the actor agency, as expressed in words in Holt's paper (p. 344): "Individuals are creative and industrious enough to individualize their consumption … but when they do so, they are always working with the existing frameworks of tastes in which they have been socialized". .

Due to inherent shared social meanings in brands within current consumer culture "Communication is the human activity … at the heart of meaning-making activities [and] … because of its meaning-making and organizing functions, plays a unique role in building brand relationships" (Duncan and Moriarty, 1998, p.2). O'Guinn and Muniz (2005) "Community endures and finds at its centre the things most cherished by its members – institutions, political causes, religious affiliations, even brands" (p. 265-6).

Brands are less products or services, less wholly owned firm assets, more symbols available for individuals to appropriate in constructing their selves "from a kaleidoscope of social meanings that define the 'who' I can be … [using] the resources of culture and society" (Anderson and Schoening, 1996, p. 214). Holt understood 19 years ago that consumption focused on brands and today it is still worth stating that active consumers will use these brands in their self-identification and group identification processes. In a consumer culture, this quest for personal meaning has tended to become inseparably linked to brands, (Fournier, 1998; Halliday and Kuenzel, 2008; Holt, 1995; McAlexander et al., 2002).

Branding once was in the producer's control. "Toast – the story of a boy's hunger", Nigel Slater's autobiography of life in suburban England in the nineteen sixties and seventies (2003) is a record of what the celebrity chef ate as a child: it is noticeable that nearly all the goods are branded. These brands were then tightly linked to a product and were considered to be social superiors of unbranded products. The manufacturers had control of Cadburys mini-rolls, of Bird's custard powder, of Bisto gravy granules, of Heinz sponge puddings. Since then the supermarkets created store wide brands and now the meanings of brands are shared and control has been further ceded to the end users not just the retailers.

> "Dialogue is no longer being controlled by corporations. Individual consumers can address and learn about businesses either on their own or through the collective knowledge of other customers. Consumers can now initiate dialogue." (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2002, p.2)

This loss of control in the virtual world opens up a space for millennials to consume arts experiences (See Conclusion, Proposition 4).

3. Conclusion and research propositions.

We have provided a strong conceptual foundation for further understanding of young consumer behaviour in Arts Marketing. We have also identified Brand Communities for MCCs as a powerful driver of engagement in arts and cultural organisations, which can be used by marketing practitioners. Should further research confirm the relevance of these insights, this paper will have enabled arts marketers to meet one of their four key challenges. Our propositions for this future research are:

1. For MCCs experience creates value; the experience is made up of emotions, feelings, memories, relationships and self-development.

2. MCCs will be more likely to participate in cultural organisations' activities when they are actively recruited to engage in activity both online and offline. However, whilst

MCCs will more easily join a virtual brand community, this membership needs to be supplemented by real time personal contact and interaction.

2b (Managerial implication) When recruiting MCCs to engage in cultural organisations' activity or brand communities (members' groups), marketing managers should consider and implement key MCCs' attendance motives, such as: 1) *social interaction and feeling of belonging*; 2) *Entertainment and experience*; 3) *self-development/self-actualization*; 4) and, finally, *prestige*.

3. MCCs desire for transcendent experience, feeling of being special, desire to contribute to the greater whole and other need can be met by their involvement in co-creation of arts experiences.

4. The loss of control by organisations in the virtual world is counter-balanced by MCCs exercising autonomous choice as to what art to consume, when to consume it and how frequently.

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