

Staying with the Trouble / Becoming liquid:
How Cultural Institutions Engage with Climate change

Tessa Scholten

5738563

MA Arts and Society

University Utrecht

Supervisor: Sigrid Merx

February 3, 2021

Wordcount: 16.124

Abstract

Donna Haraway's call to 'stay with the trouble' states dealing with climate change requires a systematically different way of thinking about and relating to the world that surrounds us. The concept of 'liquidity' has been proposed as a way for museums to adapt to our postmodern world, defined by issues as climate change. This thesis extends this concept by applying it to cultural institutions in general, asking: How are cultural institutions 'liquid' in the way that they respond to and engage with the complex issue of climate change?

The thesis develops an analytical framework suitable for mapping, analyzing, and comparing how diverse cultural institutions are liquid. This analytical framework consists of five levels: 1) the organizational model, 2) the relation to the audience, 3) the relation to the world outside, 4) (re)presentation, and 5) reinventing and reorganizing. Subsequently, the framework is illustrated by analyzing how a theater, a cultural center and a festival engage with climate change: Het Nationaal Theater, De Tolhuistuin and Welcome to the Village. Information is collected by studying official documents, the institutions' websites, and conducting interviews with high-level employees. These case studies show a couple things: first, cultural institutions evolving around time-based events are better equipped to engage with the dynamics of climate change than museums. Second, certain elements of the institutions can operate as 'liquefiers,' giving incentives for innovation. Third, liquid institutions face a constant trade-off between size and impact and internal flexibility. In conclusion, the foremost part of liquidity is the attitude of 'staying with the trouble,' facilitated by viewing climate change as a social issue, using imagination as a tool, focusing on creating experiences over presenting information, and using positive framing.

Tables of contents

1	Introduction	3
1.1	Opening statement.....	3
1.2	Focal point on climate change	4
1.3	Focal point on cultural institutions.....	6
1.4	Focal point on liquidity	8
2	Methodology.....	10
2.1	Introduction.....	10
2.2	The selection of case studies.....	10
2.3	Data collection and processing	11
3	Theoretical Framework: Liquid Institutions.....	13
3.1	Introduction.....	13
3.2	Literature review on liquid museums.....	14
3.2.1	How do the dynamics of climate change call for a change in museums?.....	15
3.2.2	What are the characteristics of a liquid museum?.....	17
3.3	An analytical framework for analyzing liquid institutions	20
3.4	Liquid institutions and staying with the trouble.....	21
4	Analysis and Discussion	23
4.1	Introducing the case studies	23
4.2	Institutions addressing climate change	24
4.3	Cultural institutions, climate change, and liquidity.	28
4.3.1	Organizational structures.....	28
4.3.2	Relation to the audience	30
4.3.3	Relation to the world outside	33
4.3.4	(Re)presentation	34
4.3.5	Reinventing and reorganizing	36
5	Conclusion	39
5.1	General conclusion.....	39
5.2	Limitations and suggestions for future research	42
5.3.	Reflection on the impact of COVID-19 on this thesis.....	43
6	Bibliography.....	46
7	Appendices	49
	Appendix A Topics list.....	49
	Appendix B Code scheme	52

Relays, string figures, passing patterns back and forth, giving and receiving patterning, holding the unasked-for pattern in one's hands, response-ability; that is the core what I mean by staying with the trouble in serious multispecies worlds.¹

1 Introduction

1.1 Opening statement

Climate change is one of our time's defining issues because of its scope, urgency, and characteristics. It seems to present itself as an exemplary issue of our global society's dynamics, defined by abstractness, complexity, uncertainty, fragmentation, and defying all national and disciplinary boundaries, while it simultaneously concerns everyone on this planet. Therefore, climate change cannot be solved by simply treating the symptoms with technical solutions. Responding to Donna Haraway's call to 'stay with the trouble,' this thesis argues that dealing with climate change requires a systematically different way of thinking about and relating to the world; it requires seeing the human as part of a collective instead of placed above all other beings on this planet and becoming sensitive to other entities' responses.² This is a dynamic process that can never be finished or fixed. In our struggle to engage with the complex issue of climate change, the arts can help translate abstract facts to human experiences. Cultural institutions specifically can play a critical role in engaging with this global and generation transcending phenomenon as they promote understanding, intercultural dialogue, and the transmission of culture across generations.³ To engage with climate change in the Haraway sense of staying with the trouble, cultural institutions also need to adopt a different attitude towards the world we inhabit.

This thesis will first argue how it requires a 'liquid' type of institution to fully interpret, represent, and interact with the dynamics of climate change and explores how this works in practice by analyzing how three diverse cultural institutions that try to stay with the complex trouble of climate change embody characteristics of a 'liquid institution.'

¹ Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Duke University Press, 2016), 12.

² Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*.

³ Monika Kaliska, "Report on the Role of Public Arts and Cultural Institutions in the Promotion of Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue 2011-2014," 2014.

1.2 Focal point on climate change

The issue of climate change can feel all-encompassing. Scientists state we need to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees to avoid catastrophic and irreversible impacts. This would require rapidly reducing the world CO₂-emission; i.e. 45 percent by 2030 and net zero in 2050.⁴ While this is theoretically still possible, limiting the devastating consequences of global warming cannot be achieved by individual changes in behavior or technical innovations as removing CO₂ from the atmosphere alone: “there is no one silver bullet,” as scientists keep emphasizing.⁵ Instead, it demands a worldwide transformation in all major sectors of life, especially consumption, agriculture, mobility, and energy.⁶ However, the issue's vastness does not mean we should give up and refrain from trying to engage with this challenge. As we are rapidly approaching the ‘tipping points’ after which global warming will accelerate without return, the measurements we take in the next decade will have more influence to slow down global warming than in the decades that follow.⁷ We are in a time of transitions; we know the old system does not fit the new circumstances, yet we do not know what system can replace it. Climate change is the ultimate wicked issue: “one that cannot be solved but must instead be resolved and renegotiated, over and over again.”^{8,9} Due to this complexity, climate policy cannot be derived from climate science directly. Instead, it must be the result of pragmatic decision-making, making climate change a social rather than a scientific problem. In sum, the urgency, characteristics, and scope of the climate change issue demand we all actively relate to it. In this way, this thesis views engaging with climate change as a part of Donna Haraway’s call to all individuals to ‘stay with the trouble.’

In her book *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin with the Chthulucene* (2016), Haraway explains the words we use to tell stories matter. This means the name we give to the time period we inhabit influences how it will develop. The current epoch is often referred to as the Anthropocene, an era in which humans' actions define the geology and ecology. This term, coined by Eugene F. Stoermer in the 1980s and popularized by Paul Crutzen in the

⁴ “Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on the Impacts of Global Warming of 1.50C above Pre- Industrial Levels,” 2018.

⁵ Mark Lawrence, “No Silver Bullet Against Climate Change,” *Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies*, December 19, 2018.

⁶ “Report of the Secretary-General on the 2019 Climate Summit and the Way Forward In,” 2020.

⁷ Sarah Parsons, “2020 Is a Critical Year for Climate Action, These Are the Challenges Ahead,” *Global Center on Adaptation*, January 24, 2020.

⁸ Reiner Grundmann, “Climate Change as a Wicked Social Problem,” *Nature Geoscience* 9, no. 8 (2016): 562.

⁹ Christopher Pollitt, “Debate: Climate Change—the Ultimate Wicked Issue,” *Public Money and Management* 36, no. 2 (2016): 78–80.

early 2000s, has become a buzzword among scientists and in popular culture. However, the term has also been criticized as it enforces ‘anthropocentric thinking,’ i.e., viewing humans as central to the world, placed above all others. Seeing humans as superior and disconnected from all nonhumans justifies the exploitation of the environment and could thereby enable the current ecological crisis. Dealing with climate change requires a shift in thinking. Since the words we use to tell stories matter, we need a new language that provides us with the possibility to think differently about ourselves and the world surrounding us. As an alternative or successor of the Anthropocene, Haraway proposes the ‘Chthulucene.’¹⁰ She does not see the Chthulucene as a defined new geological era but describes it as “an elsewhere and elsewhen that was, still is and might yet be.”¹¹ It has no hierarchical system, no fixed spatial or temporal boundaries. It can best be envisioned as a constantly evolving collective in which information, control, and agency are distributed equally among the parts. Rather than the Anthropocene, the Chthulucene is better suited to embody the time of transitions we are currently experiencing. It is an in-between two worlds: “the world is not finished and the sky had not fallen –yet.”¹² In this time of transitions, the Chthulucene must deal with the trash left behind by the Anthropocene and the destructive idea the game is over resulting from the ‘Capitalocene’: We need to stay with the trouble by engaging with our changing climate. According to Haraway, this requires rejecting human exceptionalism. All entities have ‘response-ability’ and thereby infect, influence, and respond to each other, meaning we can never be something on our own. Instead, these interactions produce agency, which is explained by Haraway’s term ‘becoming with.’ Finally, Haraway explains that when we want to interpret and represent the story of the Chthulucene, we cannot think about interactions in a fixed or linear way. Instead, we need to engage in ‘tentacular thinking’. This idea can best be visualized as a dynamic process, focused on constantly trying new connections and being sensitive the responses of others; It requires a focus on the interconnectivity, i.e., ecocentrism over anthropocentrism.

Using Haraway’s proposal of staying with the trouble as a foundation, this research can be situated in the context of ‘new materialism.’ This term, coined by Manuel DeLanda and Rosi Braidotti in the second half of 1990, embodies a shift away from the dualistic

¹⁰ Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*.

¹¹ Haraway, 31.

¹² Haraway, 55.

structures of modern and humanist traditions.¹³ Focused on our interaction with the environment, new materialist scholars reject the dualism between the human and the nonhuman by embedding the human in material processes. In this line of thought, the work of Haraway is closely related to the proposal of one of the new materialist spearheaded thinkers Karen Barad. Both use the common metaphor of ‘matter’ that encompasses both the human and nonhuman to compose new collectives in which all things -organic, inorganic, animate, and inanimate- are entangled. Barad describes ‘agency’ as a matter of ‘intra-action’: “It is an enactment, not something that someone or something has. Agency is doing/being in its intra-activity.”¹⁴ Seeing agency as moving through this interconnected network in which each entity is given the status as actant, there is a shared responsibility in-between. This thesis relies on the concepts devised by Haraway and Barad in their search to break outside the Cartesian dualism of human/non-human, nature/culture, or mind/matter to do justice to the world's complexity surrounding us. These concepts create the context, in which this thesis explores how we can conceptualize cultural institutions to fully interpret, interact, and present the issue of climate. Finally, it is important to note that although engaging with anthropogenic climate change is inherently part of Haraway’s call to stay with the trouble, it is not the same. The story of the Chthulucene has many tentacles and can be applied to diverse issues, contexts, and situations that are seen as the trash of Anthropocene or the exterminism of the Capitalocene. Staying with the trouble is a call for a different attitude, a different way of relating, engaging, storytelling. This research focuses on climate change to explore how cultural institutions can respond to Haraway’s call for staying with the trouble via this tentacle.

1.3 Focal point on cultural institutions

In the context of anthropogenic climate change, public outreach, effective communication, and education might be some of the most urgent solutions in attempting to increase the support for behavioral change and collective action.¹⁵ Although the role of arts and culture in engaging with climate change was often overlooked in the past; currently, it has become a hot

¹³ Iris Van der Tuin and Rick Dolphijn, *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2012).

¹⁴ Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway, Meeting the Universe Halfway* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2007), 235.

¹⁵ Susanne C. Moser, “Communicating Adaptation to Climate Change: The Art and Science of Public Engagement When Climate Change Comes Home,” *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 5, no. 3 (2014): 337–58.

topic for research. In the last decade, this has resulted in a rapidly growing body of research in the intersecting field of climate change communication, psychology, and education, analyzing how the arts can play a role in translating abstract scientific facts into human experiences. This research field has made it clear that as arts address the emotional side of climate change, it can stimulate discussion and change behavior as it overcomes several barriers connected to science-based communication.¹⁶ Both the Netherlands and worldwide, more and more artists, creative collectives, and cultural organizations engage with climate change as a topic. Especially within the last year, the growth seems explosive, as visible in, for example, the number of organizations that want to connect to the Warming Up initiative, the first Dutch national platform focused on connecting arts and culture to the climate issue.¹⁷ Some new cultural organizations focusing on arts and climate change have emerged, and a growing number of existing cultural institutions feel the need to relate to the issue as an organization. A few notable examples of such organizations within the Dutch scene include Het Klimaatmuseum, De Ambassade van de Noordzee, De Methaalkathedraal, Pakhuis de Zwijger, and DGTL. Summarizing, the arts can play a vital role when adopting a new way of thinking about, relating to, engaging with our changing world in order to ‘stay with the trouble.’ Observing the trend of cultural initiatives addressing climate change-related themes, we see a growing amount of institutions have taken on this task, from theaters to festivals, from cultural centers to debate platforms. However, research on cultural institutions and climate change has been limited to museums and science centers. This thesis aims to fill this gap by analyzing how different cultural institutions engage with the issue of climate change.

The ‘cultural institution’ is a term without an official definition. Combining different descriptions, this study defines cultural institutions as non-profit organizations primary “for the production, presentation, or exhibition of cultural disciplines such as music, dance, theater, literature, and the visual arts, or items of scientific interest.”¹⁸ This excludes any school or institution primarily focused on religious or sectarian activities. Cultural institutions

¹⁶ See for example: Liselotte J. Roosen, Christian A. Klöckner, and Janet K. Swim, “Visual Art as a Way to Communicate Climate Change: A Psychological Perspective on Climate Change–Related Art,” *World Art* 8, no. 1 (2018): 85–110; Laura Kim Sommer et al., “‘Pollution Pods’: The Merging of Art and Psychology to Engage the Public in Climate Change,” *Global Environmental Change* 59, no. October (2019): 101992.

¹⁷ For more information see www.wearewarmingup.nl

¹⁸ Law Insider, “Cultural Institution,” last accessed August 21, 2020, <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/cultural-institution>; Oregon Law, “Cultural Institution,” last accessed August 21, 2020, https://www.oregonlaws.org/glossary/definition/cultural_institution; IGI Global, “What Is Cultural Institutions,” last accessed August 21, 2020, <https://www-igi-global-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/dictionary/the-relationships-between-cultural-institutions-and-companies/39245>.

can play a critical role in connecting people to a more cohesive and open society by promoting cultural understanding, intercultural dialogue, and cultural heritage transmission across generations.¹⁹ As anthropogenic climate change is an intergenerational and global issue, cultural institutions can contribute considerably in society's constant struggle to engage with the wicked issue of climate change. Moreover, as cultural institutions function within our society's complex arrangement, they have to adapt to the rapidly changing digital, globalized, multicultural aspects and its problems. In this new reality, the traditional conceptualizations of an institution placed above society, defined by rigidity and fixed boundaries, is increasingly problematic. The issue of climate change amplifies the complex entanglements in which cultural institutions are embedded. Coming from an institution based on unequal power relations, binaries, or modern perceptions of objectivity, it is impossible to interact with climate change dynamics. This means we need new ways to conceptualize cultural institutions, so they are better equipped to engage with the dynamics of climate change, and thereby with the complex society in which they are emerged.

1.4 Focal point on liquidity

This study builds and elaborates on the findings of the Australian Research Council Linkage project: *Hot Science, Global Citizens: the Agency of the Museum Sector in Climate Change Interventions (2008-2011)*. This interdisciplinary and international project examined museums and science centers' roles as information providers, facilitators, and activators in the climate change debate, from a global and local perspective. The *Hot Science* project's findings and the sector-wide views were presented at a concluding symposium in 2011. These have been translated into ten propositions “to look critically at how climate change challenges the established concepts and practices of museums and science centers as places of influence, relevance, and certainty in an uncertain world.”²⁰ One proposal that has emerged from the *Hot Science* project evolves around the concept of a ‘liquid museum,’ which can be seen as a conceptual tool to envision how an institution can engage with our postmodern world's intricate arrangements. It is part of “a series of new vocabularies that can be put to work to think creatively about museums and their roles in governing arrangements

¹⁹ Kaliska, “Report on the Role of Public Arts and Cultural Institutions in the Promotion of Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue 2011-2014.”

²⁰ Fiona Cameron, Bob Hodge, and Juan Francisco Salazar, “Representing Climate Change in Museum Space and Places,” *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 4, no. 1 (January 2013): 9, <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.200>.

in the context of these new compositions, dynamics, and materialities.”²¹ This thesis interprets the liquid museum concept as an answer to Haraway’s call to stay with the trouble, a concrete and specific proposal of how cultural institutions can engage with climate change and other complex social issues.

The concept of a liquid museum has also been proposed, analyzed, and elaborated on by various other scholars in diverse contexts; the dominant voices being Van Oost (2012), Cameron (2015), Marras et al. (2016), and Goncalves (2019). As presented in these articles, the concept of a ‘liquid museum’ describes the museum in an abstract and generic form. Therefore, it can be easily extrapolated to cultural institutions other than museums. In the third chapter, I will elaborate on this, first giving an overview of the different conceptualizations of the liquid museum and subsequently bringing them together in a larger framework to map and analyze the institutions’ liquidity according to five levels. Moreover, this framework allows us to compare institutions’ liquidity and how it manifests on these different levels. The fourth chapter practices this framework by analyzing three diverse cultural institutions that are leaders in the Dutch cultural sector in how they engage with climate change. The three institutions that will be analyzed as case studies are Het Nationaal Theater, a theatre venue and theatre company; De Tolhuistuin, a cultural center; and the festival Welcome to the Village. In chapter two follows more information on the case studies’ selection and characteristics. The main question this thesis will answer is: *How are cultural institutions ‘liquid’ in the way they respond to and engage with the complex issue of climate change?*

The following set of sub-questions will help to answer this question:

- How do the dynamics of climate change call for a change in cultural institutions?
- What is a ‘liquid institution,’ and how can the different conceptualization of liquidity be brought together in an analytical framework?
- What is the relation between the ‘liquid institution’ and ‘staying with the trouble’?
- How do the three case studies engage with the issue of climate change in terms of motivations and approaches?
- How do the three case studies illustrate different implementations of the liquid institution’s analytical framework?

²¹ Fiona Cameron, “The Liquid Museum,” *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies: Museum Theory*, no. 2006 (2015): 346.d

2 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe which methods are used in the case study selection, data collection, and data processing, and provides insight into how this enables answering the question, *How are cultural institutions 'liquid' in how they respond to and engage with the complex issue of climate change?*

As the research on the role of arts and culture engaging with climate change strives to understand a complex social phenomenon, case studies play an essential role.²² The research question is structured to meet the three conditions required when using case studies as defined in *Case Study Research: Design and Method*: “(1) the main questions are “how” or “why” questions; (2) a researcher has little or no control over behavioral events; and (3) the focus of the study is a contemporary (as opposed to entirely historical) phenomenon.”²³ There is a lack of preliminary research on how cultural institutions other than museums and science centers engage with climate change. The purpose of this study is to map how and why diverse cultural institutions engage with the issue of climate change to explore rather than test a hypothesis about liquid institutions. Hence, this study can be categorized as exploratory research.²⁴ Thereby is chosen for a small number of case studies as this allows an extensive and in-depth description of institutional activities focused on climate change.

2.2 The selection of case studies

Three diverse cultural institutions serve as case studies: the theater Het Nationaal Theater located in The Hague; the cultural center De Tolhuistuin located in Amsterdam; and the festival Welcome to the Village located in Leeuwarden.

These cultural institutions are selected as diverse, prominent players in the Dutch cultural sector known for the progressive way they engage with climate change. To find out which cultural institutions meet these criteria, I relied on the insight and contacts of the Warming Up organization, where I am currently doing my internship. Warming Up was founded last year to connect arts and culture to the climate issue and has the ambition to create a yearly returning festival and a permanent platform on arts, culture, and democracy in

²² Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage., 2014), 44.

²³ Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 44

²⁴ Albert Mills, Gabrielle Durepos, and Elden Wiebe, “Exploratory Case Study,” *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*, 2013, 372–73.

the Netherlands.²⁵ As they aim to start a new project and create a network connecting existing initiatives on arts and climate in the Netherlands, they have an excellent insight into the most striking, innovative, and exciting institutions for this study. Drawing on Warming Up's database of organizations, I consulted with the initiator Matthea de Jong, and together we devised a list of suitable institutions. We focused on creating a diverse selection of arts institutions, including a theater, a festival, and a cultural center located throughout the Netherlands. I decided to exclude museums and debate centers from this selection: museums because this study wants to extend the study of liquid museums to other cultural institutions and debate centers as they do not have a primary focus on the arts. Subsequently, after emailing the top eight organizations on the list, three institutions contacted me and granted me access to their organization's working. All three institutions focus on live events and are partially subsidized by the government. However, the institutions' mission and organizational structure differ in size, founding date, earning model, preferred art discipline, and location. Through this selection, this thesis strives to get insight into some of the diverse ways cultural institutions try to stay with the complex trouble of climate change by analyzing similarities and differences and describing how this connects to the characteristics of 'liquidity.'

2.3 Data collection and processing

Information about the cultural institutions was collected in two ways: online presentation and interviewing. First, the online presence of the three organizations was analyzed through the institutions' websites, as this is generally the first place where visitors go to for information. Furthermore, the most recent policy documents, consisting of multiple-year plans and year reports, were examined to get insight into the institutions' structure, development, mission, and vision. Second, insight into the documents' underlying ideas and the motivations and struggles of engaging with climate change were obtained through interviews. As the interviews aimed to get insight into the activities relating to the issue of climate change on an institutional level, I first approached the director of each institution. Subsequently, I asked whether the director could refer me to someone else within the organization that could offer a more specific perspective on a particular conversation topic, such as the programming. This resulted in two interviews per institution, except for Welcome to the Village, where the second interviewee did not respond to my request. The interviews were semi-structured and

²⁵ See <https://wearewarmingup.nl/> for more information on the organization.

revolved around a topic list: 1) the role of the interviewee, 2) formalized strategies, 3) motivation, 4) climate change and the mission and vision, 5) characteristics of the institution, 6) organizational structure, 7) relation with the audience, 8) networks and collaborations, 9) climate change as a challenging theme, and 10) place in society.²⁶ The first topic was designed to set the context, topic two to five map how the institution engages with climate change, and topic six to ten functioned as a guide to address the institutions' liquidity. Furthermore, there was room for elaborating and adding a slightly different focus depending on the institutions' specific characteristics and the interviewee's function.²⁷ Due to a global spread of an until 2019 unknown virus called COVID-19, causing a pandemic, there were restrictions in the Netherlands that made it impossible for me to travel for face-to-face interviews. Instead, I chose to conduct the interviews through online video calls. Although the interviews were casual, the online appointment for an hour seemed to make the interviews more focused on the topics, with less room for chit-chat at the beginning of the interview. All interviews took between 30 minutes and 60 minutes and were recorded after verbal consent was provided. Afterward, the interviews were transcribed and coded. I used a hybrid model for the coding process, partway between responsive interviewing formal coding scheme and grounded theory models.²⁸ In this way, alternating between inductive and deductive analysis, it is possible to discern the interviews in concepts, topics, and themes from the literature while being open for new topics to emerge from the interview itself. It provides insight into the sub-questions without relying on a formal coding book.²⁹

²⁶ See appendix A for the elaborated topic list with accompanying questions.

²⁷ Sage Research Methods, "Semi-Structured Interview," *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, 2020.

²⁸ Herbert Rubin and Irene Rubin, "The First Phase of Analysis: Preparing Transcripts and Coding Data," in *Qualitative Interviewing (2nd Ed.): The Art of Hearing Data* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012), 19.

²⁹ See appendix B for the coding scheme.

3 Theoretical Framework: Liquid Institutions

3.1 Introduction

According to the Oxford dictionary, the noun liquid refers to “a substance that flows freely and is not a solid or a gas.” On an intuitive level, one could imagine liquid institutions as flexible, fluid, adaptable organizations. On a more conceptual level, the term liquid emerged from the idea that we live in a “liquid modernity” as has been proposed by sociologist Zygmunt Bauman. He argues our current society can be seen as a collective characterized by “fragility, temporariness, vulnerability, and inclination to constant change.”³⁰ Bauman sees society as a fragmented and hybrid collective, simultaneously consisting of traditional, modern, and postmodern worlds. The idea of liquid museums has been introduced to adjust museums to Bauman’s liquid modernity and can thereby be seen as a “project of postmodernity.”³¹ However, as Marras et al. emphasize, in the connection to institutions, ‘liquid’ does not necessarily mean ‘elusive’ or ‘fragile,’ but rather ‘mobile,’ as in ready to change shape and respond to both the conditions of our society and what is happening within the organization.³²

This study builds and elaborates on the *Hot Science Project* that looks critically at how climate change challenges the existing concepts and practices of museums and science centers. Cameron, Hodge, and Salazar combined the project's findings and the concluding symposium in ten principles for museums and science centers that cover all aspects that are necessary to consider when engaging with climate change; from relations to the public, the way of communicating, to collaborations with other institutions.³³ This thesis focuses on the recommendation for museums to become liquid addressed in the fifth principle of Cameron, Hodge, and Salazar: “Climate Change Responses Need Porous Boundaries, ‘Liquid’ Organizations, and ‘Clumsy’ Solutions.”³⁴ Fiona Cameron, the Hot Science Project's chief investigator, has introduced this concept in an earlier published article, “The Liquid Museum,” explaining how climate change dynamics call for a change in museums. The concept of a liquid museum has been explored by various other scholars in different contexts,

³⁰ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 83.

³¹ Juan Gonçalves, “The ‘Liquid Museum’: A Relational Museum That Seeks to Adapt to Today’s Society,” *The Museum Review* 4, no. 1 (2019): 6.

³² Anna Maria Marras et al., “A Case Study of an Inclusive Museum: The National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari Becomes “Liquid”,” in *Cultural Heritage in a Changing World*, ed. Jan Karol Borowiecki, Neil Forbes, and Antonella Fresa (Zurich: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 101.

³³ Cameron, Hodge, and Salazar, “Representing Climate Change in Museum Space and Places.”

³⁴ Cameron, Hodge, and Salazar, 15.

creating a new discourse on how museums can act in a meaningful way in this complex, turbulent, and fluid world. These articles refer to museums' functioning on an abstract level; therefore, they can be easily extrapolated to other cultural institutions. Abstracting the building blocks of cultural institutions, all cultural institutions as defined in the first chapter rely on the arts, storytelling, and imagination to engage with society while interacting with both an audience and a collection. Traditionally, a collection refers to the artifacts or artworks in a museum. However, as David Carr explains in *The Promise of Cultural Institutions*, a collection can also be thought of in a more abstract way consisting of information, knowledge, memories, lessons, and contexts, as long as they are offered freely to the people who want to seek them.³⁵ In this broader interpretation, a collection can also refer to a series of events, workshops, plays, performances, or a combination of these. Analyzing cultural institutions' functioning via these abstract building blocks makes it possible to extend the framework for liquid museums to theaters, festivals, and cultural centers.

In this chapter, I will start by providing a literature review of liquid museums. Subsequently, I will combine the various proposals in an analytical framework that allows me to map, describe, analyze, and compare the liquidity of various cultural institutions. Finally, I will reflect on the relation between 'liquid institutions' and Haraway's call to 'stay with the trouble.'

3.2 Literature review on liquid museums

As the term liquidity is an abstract and relational concept, so is the liquid museum concept. There does not exist one demarcated definition or a definite list of characteristics. The easiest way to understand the idea of a liquid museum seems to be in opposition to a solid one. According to Cameron, this solid or 'modern museum model' is based on "hierarchies; nature/culture dualisms; modern precepts of certainty, objectivity, truth, and expertise; linear forms of communication; and the production of social and scientific facts."³⁶ This modern museum model thereby consists of the dualistic structures new materialist thinkers like Haraway reject. Cameron explains that this modern model is not suited to "philosophically and ontologically" deal with our contemporary world's challenges.³⁷ In other words, she proposes the liquid museum model because the modern museum model cannot do justice to

³⁵ David Carr, *The Promise of Cultural Institutions* (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2003).

³⁶ Cameron, "The Liquid Museum," 345.

³⁷ Cameron, 345.

the dynamics of climate change. Although different cultural institutions are built on different values and structures, these dynamics explain in which direction institutions need to move when becoming liquid. In this section, I will provide a literature review on liquid museums by first describing how the five fundamental dynamics of climate change, as identified by Cameron in the article “The Liquid Museum,” call for a change in this modern museum model. Subsequently, I will discuss the main focuses of other scholars engaging with the liquid museums' concept to sketch a complete overview of the existing discourse.

3.2.1 How do the dynamics of climate change call for a change in museums?

The first dynamic process climate change sets in motion is a shift in the temporal framing to the far future.³⁸ The perception of climate change as an economic and financial problem connected to predicting potential risks through science modeling drives this dynamic. Cameron explains that museums need to engage with a new “future-present” trajectory. This term, borrowed from philosopher Slavoj Žižek, describes how “the apocalyptic future becomes a way of experiencing time.”³⁹ When dealing with this fear for the future, Žižek explains that imagination is critical. Cameron describes that the future-present trajectory challenges the way museums situate themselves: They tend to focus on the past, and museums that do engage in this future-present trajectory predominantly focus on shaping individuals to become moral citizens instead of relying on the imaginary. Some of Cameron’s interviewees felt stuck in the concept of a museum as a ‘safe-space’ to look at the past; however, others saw possibilities to see museums as places that link the past to the far future through presenting possible climate futures that would rely on imagination and art as a strategy. In this way, liquid museums could become the much-needed antidote for the short-termism of governments, the clickbait media, or the profit-driven agenda of the private sector when discussing climate change.⁴⁰

Second, engaging with climate change also means dealing with extreme uncertainty. Cameron suggests this is probably the most considerable challenge for museums, as they are built on a positivist frame of certainty;⁴¹ modern museums are used to present social and scientific facts to illuminate the truth and a knowable future. Museums should move away

³⁸ Cameron, 346.

³⁹ Slavoj Žižek, *Living in the End Times* (London: Verso, 2010).

⁴⁰ Cameron, “The Liquid Museum,” 347.

⁴¹ Cameron, 348.

from this positivist frame, as it could lead to presenting climate change as a simple, one-dimensional story. Climate changes consist of paradoxes and ambiguities that challenge the positivist worldview: there are no single solutions, no complete answers, or determining outcomes. Museums should, therefore, strive to embrace the plurality of conflicting forces and give partial and dynamic answers.

The third process refers to embracing the complexity of issues like climate change. This is a challenge for museums as they have a history of producing scientific knowledge in the process of simplification: i.e., the assumption that producing science statements entails removing the ideological framing, the variability, diversity, and controversial elements.⁴² In engaging with climate change, this translates, for example, in attempting to fit its narrative in just carbon footprints and emission levels. In a content production system centered on simplification, modern museums tend to view communication as a one-way system and treating information as politically neutral. Climate change exposes how all human and non-human actors are entangled and influence each other. Instead of just relying on statements, museums must acknowledge and emphasize the unpredictability, non-linearity, and self-organization of all elements experiencing and influencing climate change.

Fourth, through different globalization processes and the fast development of digital technologies, all institutions have become increasingly interdependent. In addition to their local and national contexts, museums need to take the geopolitical contexts and situations into account; especially curating on climate change, an issue that demands global discussion, cross-national collaborations and measurements, challenges institutions to operate across sectors and scales. This requires the spatial and structural reframing of institutions to adaptive and fluid, engaging with different networks, worldviews, values, and knowledge.⁴³ The final dynamic that Cameron refers to is the issue of anthropocentrism that is both radicalized and disrupted by the issue of climate change. The proposals of new materialist scholars as Haraway and Barad challenge museums to break with the lens of modernity that sees the human as central allowed to command, control, and exploit nature. Instead, they should “see and present a world as one enmeshed and shared with many human and nonhuman entities.”⁴⁴

⁴² Cameron, 349.

⁴³ Cameron, 350.

⁴⁴ Cameron, 351.

3.2.2 What are the characteristics of a liquid museum?

In the previous decade, the term ‘liquid museum’ has been proposed independently by Cameron (2015), Van Oost (2012), and Marras et al. (2016). In “The ‘Liquid Museum’: A Relational Museum That Seeks to Adapt to Today’s Society” (2019), Gonçalves brings together and compares these authors' work. All proposals build on Bauman’s idea of liquid modernity; however, analyzing the different articles proves the context used to define ‘liquidity’ determines the focus, usage, and interpretation of the concept.

Cameron concludes that engaging with the five dynamics of climate change demands a liquid museum model instead of a solid one. She states that this liquid model can be imagined as “complex and relational, as heterogeneous assemblages made up of material and expressive forms and enmeshed in diverse collectives that are composed of many human as well as nonhuman elements.”⁴⁵ To fully grasp this definition's meaning, I will discuss the different concepts incorporated into this definition separately. First, Cameron explains that the ‘material components’ refer to everything from the building, the exhibitions, the people, and the geographical location, while the ‘expressive forms’ refer to the structure and all immaterial practices and capacities, as the brand expression, network, expertise, contacts or mission statements. Second, Cameron incorporates the concept of ‘assemblages’ in this definition. This term, coined by Deleuze and Guattari, prescribes that the parts are in a specific kind of arrangement.⁴⁶ In “What is an Assemblage?,” Thomas Nail explains that assemblages' general logic comes down to “the rejection of unity in favor of multiplicity, and the rejection of essence in favor of events,” which has two philosophical consequences.⁴⁷ Firstly, an assemblage is a multiplicity, which is neither a whole nor a part. Assemblages are not like organic units, where all parts need to be together to function, but more like machines defined by their external relation. Therefore, seeing an institution as an assemblage allows the parts to be reorganized: the important thing is not the elements themselves but what is in between them. Secondly, since an assemblage does not have an essence, it never becomes a final product separate from the context of social and historical processes. Therefore, do not ask what the institution's final essence is, but look at the contingent and singular features and ask what it can do. As Cameron phrases it, “As an assemblage, the liquid museum and its

⁴⁵ Cameron, 358.

⁴⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, “A Thousand Plateaus,” in *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Maiden, Oxford and Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 1998), 378–86.

⁴⁷ Thomas Nail, “What Is an Assemblage?,” *Sub-Stance* 46, no. 142 (2017): 22.

components are mobile, cohere with others, territorialize, and also disperse or deterritorialize according to conditions and events. Change, therefore, becomes a process, both intended and unintended, in which agency is rethought in terms of relational resources and institutional capacities.”⁴⁸ Finally, by describing liquid museums as “enmeshed in the collectives composed of many human as well as nonhuman elements,” Cameron emphasizes how liquid museums become in intra-action with their surroundings. She thereby adopts the worldview Haraway argues is required to stay with the trouble: to see also other entities than humans as actants, participants, or agents with response-ability.

On the other hand, Van Oost (2012) proposes the ‘liquid museum’ as an alternative museum model that is better adjusted to liquid modernity focused on our late modern digital society. Here she differs from Cameron, who specifically connects our liquid modernity to the challenges of the climate change issue. Besides similar critiques on museums' traditional, hierarchical system, Van Oost identifies “the blurring of the boundaries between collections and audiences” as the main foundation of creating a liquid museum.⁴⁹ Van Oost explains the Internet of Things makes the division between the two obsolete as it is characterized by a “non-hierarchical network of tangible and intangible (immaterial) objects (heritage), people and institutions.”⁵⁰ In other words, as both objects and persons can become a bundle of data in a digital, networked society, in theory, all these actors' contributions are equally valuable. Besides defining the concept, Van Oost goes a step further than Cameron by adding a preliminary idea for a methodology that can translate the liquid museum concept into a methodology for research and daily practice. She suggests this methodology should combine elements of the “Living Lab research cycle” with elements of the “Actor-Network-Theory.” The Living Lab refers to a “research methodology for sensing, prototyping, validating and refining complex solutions in multiple and evolving real-life contexts.”⁵¹ Becoming a ‘liquid museum’ requires the re-thinking of museums’ internal boundaries. New developments as the emergence of new media applications make this easier, for example, by involving and engaging the audience. The Living Lab approach aims “to support the development of new technologies and applications and to test these applications on their market viability before

⁴⁸ Cameron, “The Liquid Museum,” 358.

⁴⁹ Olga Van Oost, “Living Lab Methodology in Museum Studies: An Exploration,” *The Transformative Museum*, no. May (2012): 486.

⁵⁰ Van Oost, 487.

⁵¹ William Mitchell original source not available, quoted in Jo Pierson and Bram Lievens, “Configuring Living Labs For A ‘Thick’ Understanding Of Innovation,” *Ethnographic Praxis in Industry Conference Proceedings* 2005, no. 1 (2005): 115.

actually entering the market.”⁵² This method, however, relies on a fixed framework that takes the anthropocentric reality as a starting point. The Actor-Network-Theory of Bruno Latour, on the other hand, states clearly that defined frameworks and systems are non-existent, providing a “wonderful ethnographic alternative that focuses on narratives and the dynamic assemblages of actors (people, objects and spaces).”⁵³ Together, these two methodologies enable liquid museums to focus on innovation through the circular and non-linear processes that Haraway’s description of the tentacular thinking prescribes.

Another group of scholars, Marras et al., take on a more practical approach than the previous two scholars by focusing on a concrete case study. The article “Liquid Museum: A Moving Museum” describes and analyzes an accessibility and inclusivity project referred to as the ‘Liquid museum.’ This article explains liquidity as a “chameleon-like mobility” of a museum to tailor to different visitors’ needs. By viewing art as a form of communication, they suggest a liquid museum can be created by “the building of perceptual and sensory pathways that allow a total use of the museal structure and its contents.”⁵⁴ Marras et al. conclude that accommodating different types of accessibility next to physical accessibility, cognitive, sensory, and digital accessibility are essential for becoming a liquid museum.

Finally, the most recent article on liquid museums is written by scholar Gonçalves. He builds directly on Cameron’s idea of solid and liquid museums but does not focus on a specific characteristic of our postmodern society. Instead, he introduces the concept by explaining when society is seen as a liquid product, museums need to adapt their ‘museological exercises’ as well from solid to liquid.⁵⁵ Gonçalves describes a liquid museum as a structure that seeks to not only manifest but also produce liquidity. By constantly updating its theoretical foundation, ideology, activities, and techniques, the institution can try to establish horizontal relations between museums, society, collection, and patrimony; thereby engaging in the process of ‘liquefaction.’ Subsequently, he focuses on the governing model of the two types of museums. Within an institution, the ones in power can adopt two types of governmental actions: “a traditional administration that focuses on unilateral action in which government and society interact separately, and an updated administration which

⁵² Van Oost, “Living Lab Methodology in Museum Studies: An Exploration,” 487.

⁵³ Van Oost, 490.

⁵⁴ Marras et al., “A Case Study of an Inclusive Museum: The National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari Becomes “Liquid”,” 101.

⁵⁵ Gonçalves, “The ‘Liquid Museum’: A Relational Museum That Seeks to Adapt to Today’s Society,” 6.

allows operational freedom for institutions to work more closely with society.”⁵⁶ Looking at the management of both types of organizations, the traditional administration model comes from the solid museum model. In contrast, the updated model of administration enables the development of a liquid museum. From the updated administration, two aspects follow that are necessary for a liquid institution's practice: “decentralization and autonomy.”⁵⁷

Decentralization refers to the process of democratization, which is necessary to respond fast and effectively to what is happening in society. The decentralization of decision-making shortens the distance between those in power and the individual, which improves the effectiveness of services and enables individuals to pursue their interests. Autonomy follows from decentralization; it allows for viewing administrations as a tool to achieve the goals of developments instead of seeing it as an end in itself. In sum, a liquid institution is relational with porous boundaries; therefore, the liquefaction process means softening the boundaries between audience and collection, one department from another, inside and outside the institution's physical walls.

3.3 An analytical framework for analyzing liquid institutions

The different conceptualizations of the liquid museum described in 3.2. offer suggestions for the functioning and analyzing of liquid museums but lack a coherent framework. This thesis aims to contribute to the existing literature by bringing these different conceptualizations of liquid museums together into a larger framework that allows to map, describe and analyze the liquidity of diverse cultural institutions through five levels: i) the organizational model, ii) the relation to the audience, iii) the relation to the world outside, iv) (re)presentation and v) reinvention and reorganizing. These different levels are devised to address all the abstract building blocks of a cultural institution, to compare institutions in terms of how liquid they are and how liquidity manifests on these different levels. The different meanings and interpretations of these levels will be illustrated by analyzing the three case studies, sharpening the framework.

The first level refers to the organizational model. Liquid institutions have an updated administration that enables decentralization and autonomy. The liquefaction process can thereby be seen as a move away from old hierarchal relations towards more horizontal relations. The second level focuses on the relation with the audience. Liquid institutions have

⁵⁶ Gonçalves, 7.

⁵⁷ Gonçalves, 8.

an open, interactive relation with the audience, evolving around accessibility and inclusivity. They strive to make their material and immaterial cultural heritage accessible for all people by emphasizing participation and individual involvement. The third level is the relation to the world outside the institution, referring to networks and collaborations. Liquid institutions have porous borders and actively connect to actors and agents outside the institution. Liquid institutions become in intra-action with their environment. They strive to be open to our fluid reality by being open to all kinds of values, opinions, and rationales from the diverse people and other entities connected to the institution. The fourth level focuses on (re)presentation. Liquid institutions represent our society and its issues in a way that does justice to paradoxes and ambiguities. Liquid institutions embrace the plurality of conflicting forces and give dynamic and partial answers. This also means refraining from looking at the world through a lens of anthropocentrism. In this process, imagination can be used as a tool. The final level focuses on reinventing and reorganizing. Liquid institutions embrace unpredictability and favor non-linear processes of sensing and prototyping. Liquid institutions are organized in a way that allows them to continually evolve and updating themselves as liquidity is a process and can never be finished or fixed.

3.4 Liquid institutions and staying with the trouble

Liquidity is a relational concept, which means that a liquid institution in a vacuum cannot exist. It is necessary to define the context to which the liquid institution adapts to make it meaningful. The different proposals discussed above all build on Bauman's 'liquid modernity'; however, this term itself lacks specificity. The proposals add specificity through different focuses, for example, on our late digital society or the institution's administration, which work separately but lack a coherent context necessary for his thesis' analytical framework. To provide specificity and coherence, this thesis connects liquid institutions to our struggle of engaging with the climate change issue within the context of Haraway's call to stay with the trouble. The proposals all build on Bauman's postmodern worldview, which connects closely to the new materialist worldview of Haraway, as visible in, for example, the move away from anthropocentrism and viewing the world as consisting of 'assemblages.' Haraway's concept of the Chthulucene can therefore replace Bauman's concept of 'liquid modernity.' It is a time of transition: to deal with the changing climate, we need to change our attitude, the way we see and relate to the world. Focusing on cultural institutions, this thesis argues this requires a transition from solid to liquid. Simultaneously, there was no tool to translate Haraway's call for individuals to map, analyze, and compare cultural institutions'

functioning. This thesis sees the liquid museum concept not only as a project of postmodernity but as a response to Haraway's call to stay with the trouble: a concrete and specific proposal of how cultural institutions can engage with climate change and other complex social issues. Haraway's call to stay with the trouble is the umbrella term that connects all the proposals to the topic this thesis is interested in, engaging with climate change—summarizing, it provides coherence, specificity, and meaning to the liquid institution's framework.

4 Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introducing the case studies

Het Nationaal Theater (HNT)

Het Nationaal Theater is founded in 2017 as a fusion of Het Nationaal Toneel, NTJong, the Koninklijke Schouwburg, and Theater aan het Spui, all located in The Hague. With this fusion, HNT received access to the complete range of theater halls available for its programming and became the largest traveling theater company in the Netherlands. They are currently one of three theaters in the Netherlands that both produce and present, which gives them the ability to influence the entire chain of theater-making. They try to divide all resources between their three main activities: productions, programming, and activities from the department Education and Interaction. Besides the primary purpose of HNT “to make the best theater, program and present the best plays, and share that with as many people as possible,” they also present themselves as “community house of the city”: not just a physical building but also a virtual meeting place.⁵⁸ In sum, HNT is a large organization with a strong position in the market. In 2019, they reached over 350.000 people with the three main activities and covered 164,9 FTE.

In the research process, I interviewed Cees Debets, general director since 2018, and Leo Sterrenburg, the head of the department Education and Interaction and involved since before the fusion.

De Tolhuistuin (DTHT)

The Tolhuistuin is a cultural center located in the North of Amsterdam next to the IJ bank, on the location that used to function as the company restaurant of Shell. After Shell left, there was temporary programming in the building from 2007-2014, until the DTHT officially opened their doors in 2014 as a “creative workplace for the future for a broad audience.”⁵⁹ The center of the DTHT is the garden that connects the different historical buildings, including a cafe restaurant, various exposition places, concert and stage halls, studios, and workplaces. This is the only culture house in Amsterdam with continuous inside and outside programming. The history, qualities, and characteristics of the location determined a focus on diversity, radical inclusivity, and interdisciplinarity, always situated in Amsterdam-North's

⁵⁸ Het Nationaal Theater, “Het Nationale Theater in Oprichting” (Den Haag, n.d.), 1.

⁵⁹ “Over ons,” tolhuistuin.nl, last accessed June 1, 2020 via <https://tolhuistuin.nl/over-ons>

local context. It is a relatively small organization: in 2018, the average employed staff was 5 FTE.⁶⁰ However, the workplaces also accommodated 24 other cultural and social entrepreneurs, with whom they connect and collaborate for their programming.

In the research process, I interviewed Matthea de Jong, director since March 2020, and Charlotte Verhoeff, the programmer of the Tolhuistuin.

Welcome to the Village (WTTV)

Welcome to the Village is a four-day festival on performing arts, visual art, social design, food, and innovation. It takes place every July in the nature reserve De Groene Ster, just outside the city of Leeuwarden. The week before the festival, WTTV organizes Het DORP, where 50 entrepreneurs, students, artists, makers, and experts work together in interdisciplinary teams towards a circular economy in 2050. WTTV was founded in 2012 with the desire to make their environment more beautiful and exciting. The organization is currently in transition from a volunteer-based organization to an increasingly professionalized organization with accompanying responsibilities. In 2019, they hosted 7.239 visitors and 500 volunteers. Last year, the festival won the EFFE-award from the European Festival Association due to their “artistic excellent program and strong impact on the local and regional partnerships.”⁶¹

In the research process, I interviewed Ruben Bosch, the general director since 2019.

4.2 Institutions addressing climate change

This section introduces how the three case studies engage with climate change by listing the institutions' measures and summarizing the main motivations to address climate change in light of their mission and vision statement and their general artistic profile.

Het Nationaal Theater

We tell new stories of the urban community in transition. We connect to the city.

We celebrate urban rituals and give again shape to her collective moments.

We play a role in the societal debate.

⁶⁰ Tolhuistuin, “Bestuursverslag 2018” (Amsterdam, 2018), 23.

⁶¹ “Welcome to the Village wint prestigieuze effe award,” welcometothevillage.nl, last accessed June 7 2020 via <https://welcometothevillage.nl/welcome-to-the-village-wint-prestigieuze-effe-award/>

We search for a deepening behind the current event and stories that concern us now. Where possible, we engage with the thematic lines.⁶²

The basic principles for the autonomous programming listed above demonstrate how HNT wants to be “a leader in large societal themes as diversity, inclusivity, and sustainability,” as the director Cees Debets articulates. Climate change is mentioned in the multi-annual plan as one of the crises we need to relate to and is most concretely captured in the thematic line called *Stewardship*. This thematic line describes climate change as an “artistically a challenging and extraordinary urgent theme” and revolves around the question: “What kind of world do we leave behind for our children?”⁶³ As also described in the programming principles listed above, Debets explained that addressing stewardship is secondary to other goals: “we do not necessarily choose per theme. Rather the artistic, substantive line is relevant. [...] But it caught our attention. We are very sensitive towards everyone who wants to engage with this issue, attempts to remove it from its theoretical framework and to oversee the consequences.”

Last year, the direct reason to explore this theme extensively with their audience was the production of *The Children*. This play was directed by the artistic leader of HNT, Eric de Vroedt, and revolved around the question of stewardship. HNT did not just use this play as a conversation starter in programs such as *We, the children*, but also seized it as a reason to analyze and improve the sustainability of their production process. Because “you cannot convince the audience if you are not committed backstage as well,” as Debets explained. On the website, HNT describes that they are trying to reduce their ecological footprint behind the scenes by, for example, using recycled paper for the brochures, not serving water in plastic bottles, and arranging electric taxis.⁶⁴ Also, they are affiliated with Het Haags Klimaatpact to help make The Hague climate neutral by 2030. Furthermore, Debets feels that sustainability does not only refer to taking care of the environment in terms of climate change but also in providing the right working conditions and fair practice; or for example, “the responsibility for a 225-year-old building, that we want to maintain for another 200 years.” The Hague's municipality owns the buildings, so together with the municipalities and experts, they explore the possibilities to make the theaters climate neutral.

⁶² Het Nationaal Theater, “Inhoudelijk Verslag Producties, Programmering, Programma’s En Educatie 2018” (Den Haag, 2018), 14.

⁶³ Het Nationaal Theater, “Het Nationale Theater in Oprichting,” 4.

⁶⁴ “Duurzaamheid,” hnt.nl, last accessed June 1, 2020 via <https://www.hnt.nl/pQd4btd/duurzaamheid>

When asked whether it was also possible to create programs on the topic of climate change without *The Children* as a direct reason, Leo Sterrenburg assured me that although having a play as a reason makes it easier, as it creates a basis, “it is always possible.” According to her, the reason to address climate change is straightforward: “We do not exist without our audience and the environment in which we are situated. We do not want to live by the issues of the day. Climate change is a very prominent theme. If you relate to everything that is going on in our society, it is self-explanatory; as a club, we address [climate change]. That is necessary.”

De Tolhuistuin

The vision statement on the website of the DTHT explicitly addresses the issue of climate change, saying the DTHT represents “the green heart of the city” and “will become a catalyst to an inclusive and fossil-free future.”⁶⁵ Also, they specify a focus on “making the challenges and possibilities that accompany the climate issue palpable for a broad audience, and giving it a practical interpretation.” In the interviews, both Matthea De Jong and Charlotte Verhoeff emphasized that this mission and vision are brand new as they were filed last February. They changed the previous focus on ‘inclusivity’ to ‘radical inclusivity’ to not just refer to “diversity in society, but also to diversity in living organisms and natural sources.” The website and year reports describe this as the belief that “human, culture, and nature form an organic whole.”⁶⁶ During the interview, De Jong clarified this is based on the contribution of scholar Bruno Latour, who proposed democracy could acquire an additional layer if we would include the perspective of nonhumans. Tenants like Building Conversations and the Ambassade van de Noordzee already embody the focus on ‘radical inclusivity.’ Verhoeff sees this as “a good point of reference.” Currently, it is not yet a requirement for all their events. However, once they have established the desired profile, she is confident this will attract more makers that address this topic.

Most concretely, DTHT addresses climate change in the new program line *Expeditie Groen 2020*: “an imagination program about events as climate change, biodiversity loss and the urbanization in Amsterdam-North.”⁶⁷ It is a participatory program, De Jong explains: “less focused on sending information, and more on doing something together, being active

⁶⁵ “Over ons,” tolhuistuin.nl, last accessed June 1, 2020 via <https://tolhuistuin.nl/over-ons>

⁶⁶ Tolhuistuin, “Bestuursverslag 2018,” 7.

⁶⁷ “Expeditie Groen,” tolhuistuin.nl, last accessed June 1 2020 via <https://tolhuistuin.nl/nieuws/expeditiegroen>

yourself. It is an investigation together with creators, experts, within and sometimes outside DTHT.” This fits in the artistic profile Verhoeff sketched: “DTHT is a place where interested people can come together, who want to experiment, and discover their world through us.” The unique location makes it thereby possible to create programs where the audience experiences nature together with an artist. In short, the four program pillars revolve around green imagination, creating a welcome, lively place, the local context of Amsterdam-Noord, and cultural renewal.

Besides all team members seeing this as an urgent issue, the motivation to become “the heart of the transition to the future” is also driven by the building's history. The garden used to have a public function. However, Shell closed it for the neighborhood, making it “the heart of the fossil fuel industry.” Verhoeff explains they can now “use this sentiment to pursue innovation, especially to put the environment and climate change on the agenda because the issue is already present.” Finally, the year report does not mention any goals focused on the sustainability of DTHT itself, except for the origin of the restaurant's food and drinks.⁶⁸ However, De Jong explained they already make sustainable choices where possible, and in the future, they strive to incorporate “sustainability in the DNA of the organization.”

Welcome to the Village

According to the year reports, WTTV distinguishes itself in the Dutch festival field by their ‘two faces’: The aim to be “an autonomous presentation place, with a sharp and distinctive international program,” while seeing “the festival as an intervention from a societal movement, as a social design project, a tool to achieve a sustainable world.”⁶⁹ They refer to themselves as “cheerful activists,” who believe festivals can be more than places for hedonism.⁷⁰ This means that they do not focus on what goes wrong but show how it could be done differently. WTTV views the festival as a “society at scale” or a “living laboratory”: a place where they can experiment with new rules and test the innovations devised and created during the summer school Het DORP. The mission statement explains the goal is to contribute to Sustainable Development Goals with the programming and how they organize

⁶⁸ “Duurzaam eten en drinken,” tolhuisuin.nl, last accessed June 1 2020, via <https://tolhuistuin.nl/nieuws/duurzaam-eten-en-drinken>

⁶⁹ Welcome to the Village, “Jaarverslag 2019” (Leeuwarden, 2020), 11.

⁷⁰ Welcome to the Village, 10.

the festival. Dealing with climate change is thus incorporated into the foundation of the institution.

Concretely, the festival had set the ambitious goal to become entirely circular in 2022, when their 10th edition was planned. This encompasses everything from food, the construction process to energy and water use. More information on the progress can be found in a critical report made by an external party after the fifth edition.⁷¹ While this process requires taking small steps, setting such an ambitious goal has attracted stimulating partners who want to collaborate for this challenge, director Ruben Bosch explains. The term climate change, however, is not once mentioned in the year reports. This indicates that, as an institution, they do not think about climate change as a separate theme. Bosch underlined this when he deflected the question of why they address climate change, saying, “We kind of do everything. It is also about social innovation.” Closing the interview, he summarizes this attitude saying, “We do not really engage in climate programming. It is part of our DNA, and that is what we feel is most important. We think the whole world should just think logically. We do not want to program [climate change] per se, but we want to remember that we need to take this into account to preserve our future, our society.”

4.3 Cultural institutions, climate change, and liquidity.

The previous section introduced how all three case studies strive to engage with climate change's complex trouble. All institutions program live events besides exhibitions and can thereby rely on primary time-based instead of space-based mediums. Thereby, they seem to encounter other challenges than museums. Simultaneously, it has become clear that the three case studies differ in size, ideology, focus, and approach, and thus work with different structures. This section will analyze and discuss these differences and similarities through five levels of a liquid institution to answer the question, *How do the three case studies illustrate different implementations of the liquid institution's analytical framework?*

4.3.1 Organizational structures

The organizational structures of the three institutions differ significantly. Based on Gonçalves' theory of governmental actions, autonomy and decentralization are seen as

⁷¹ Nadine Galle and Sabine. De Haes, “Welcome to the Circular Village.” (Amsterdam, 2017).

necessary aspects of a liquid institution.⁷² This section will describe the difficulties and advantages of the different organizational structures when striving for an updated administration.

The director of HNT explained that it is challenging to be decentralized, as the theater is one of the slowest art forms that exist: “We work with makers that are inspired by reality, but the system in the Netherlands requires that we determine 1.5 years before [the performance] what we are going to make.” He elaborated, saying the current crisis caused by COVID-19 has exposed the existence of a cumbersome system, a structure in which the different parties keep each other hostage. The department Interaction and Education, that creates educational and contextual programs, can react faster to what is happening in society providing the institution with flexibility. Last year, this department organized several programs addressing climate change as *The Earth is HOT*, *Wij zijn het Klimaat* and *We, the Children*, and participated in the climate march in The Hague on 27 September 2019.⁷³⁷⁴ As this is a large department with 15 employees, they have a vast outreach and more money to invest than other companies to create this kind of audience framing. Furthermore, being a large organization that encompasses both a company and a stage gives HNT the possibility to influence the entire production chain. Debets explains that in the cultural sector, the habit is to blame others during the quest to become sustainable. However, “excuses as the light designer saying he cannot use led lights because the theater does not support that, do not apply on us because we are everything.” Debets feels it is crucial to become sustainable, as they fulfill an exemplary role. However, this is not without struggles; “I, for example, do not want that every biscuit served with a cup of coffee in the breaks is wrapped in plastic. That gives much tension in the organization as there is always someone else who says: it is unhygienic if you do not.” DTHT, on the other hand, consists of a small team that gives meaning to the program in collaboration with others. As they are a smaller organization, they have less influence on the production chain and a smaller direct impact on the sector than HNT. However, according to De Jong, precisely the collaborations with these different green,

⁷² Juan Gonçalves, “The Liquid Museum: A Museum That Seeks To Adapt To Its Community,” *European Journal of Arts*, 2018.

⁷³ “Programma De Aarde is HOT bekend,” hnt.nl, last accessed June 2 2020 via https://www.hnt.nl/nieuws/1021/Programma_De_Aarde_is_HOT_bekend/

⁷⁴ “Wij zijn het Klimaat,” hnt.nl, last accessed June 2 2020 via https://www.hnt.nl/voorstellingen/2558/Wij_zijn_het_klimaat/BorderKitchen_Wij_zijn_het_klimaat/

⁷⁵ “Klimaat converentie voor jongeren,” hnt.nl, last accessed June 2 2020 via https://www.hnt.nl/nieuws/1011/Klimaatconferentie_voor_jongeren_in_de_Koninklijke_Schouwburg/

cultural, and artistic organizations that rent their office at DTHT make them uniquely suitable to engage with the issue of climate change. Having a small team with like-minded members implies having little possibility for internal conflict and the ability to change quickly to new circumstances. However, both interviewees of DTHT referred multiple times to the fact that they are still exploring the new mission and vision. Looking at DTHT through the lens of an assemblage, it is visible that the parts are currently rearranged, and it takes time to establish this new course through their external relations. This illustrates that a team's flexibility is not the sole determinant of the decentralization of an institution. Finally, WTTV is quite different from the other two institutions. The organization works from the philosophy of creating together: “We start from the discussion element; not one brilliant mind devised the festival, but a fusion of 30 or 40 people who devised it together.” This seems as updated as an administration can be. However, in the last years, the institution has become more hierarchical as the festival transitions from a volunteer-based to a professional-based institution. “This is unavoidable,” Bosch explains, “otherwise it becomes simply too risky because you are dependent on the people of the first year and at some point, they will leave.” Finally, all interviewees said the programmers had a high level of autonomy in following their interest, which is necessary as, in the words of Sterrenburg, “It is tough to create something in the arts sector without intrinsic motivation.”

In sum, focusing on the organizational structures, a large, permanent organization is less flexible in making internal changes and has a larger impact on society. HNT has little decentralization in making short-term changes in their programming. However, it tries to overcome this with the department of Education and Interaction and is very decentralized in making changes in the production chain. DTHT is more decentralized in its programming but relies on partners and currently has less influence in the production chain. WTTV, on the other hand, is founded on liquid terms but slowly loses some decentralization as it grows larger and professionalizes.

4.3.2 Relation to the audience

Liquid institutions revolve around accessibility and inclusivity. This section will discuss how the case studies display liquid characteristics in the relationships with their audience, the way they tailor to the needs of different visitors, and emphasize participation and individual involvement.

All three institutions place a high value on inclusivity and organizing participatory events. It seems as though the focus on inclusivity proceeds the focus on sustainability and

taking responsibility for the environment. This is literally the case for DTHT, whose mission evolved from a focus on inclusivity to radical inclusivity. Verhoeff explained this change was needed because: “Now [a mission centered on inclusivity] is outdated, every place should be inclusive.” This was underlined by Bosch, saying, “the government requires inclusivity. [...] You need to relate to it.” However, he happily expressed that it is not a requirement for all organizations, as making inclusivity obligated would just mean “more rules and frames, which could keep you from focusing on what you want to achieve.” This suggests that attaining liquid characteristics should be intrinsically motivated and cannot be imposed.

The “chameleon-like mobility” of a liquid institution to adapt to the diverse visitors’ needs described by Marras et al. can, for example, be recognized in HNT’s project *HNTOnbeperkt*, whereby the Dutch term ‘Onbeperkt’ translates to both ‘unlimited’ as ‘without impairment.’⁷⁶ In this program line, HNT collaborates with specialized organizations to make the plays and programs accessible for a larger audience.⁷⁷ WTTV addressed this mobility, for example, through the program line *Social design*, in which they strive to make the festival accessible for everyone, through three ways of participation: “as staff/volunteer, as artist/maker, and as an audience.”⁷⁸ Moreover, they describe in their artistic profile, WTTV “strives to merge arts disciplines, sectors and social groups, because we feel that our society increasingly exists of people who color only within the lines of their own tribe.” This illustrates how a mission could evolve around creating porous boundaries within an institution.

However, being open to all views does not necessarily mean that every program attracts diverse people; a constant struggle for all three institutions. De Jong from DTHT explains it is important everybody feels welcome and to have a wide selection for a diverse audience, but for them, it is not a goal in itself “to bring people with different opinions together and get some polemics out of it.” Some projects just attract people who are already interested in a specific theme. Debets from HNT also said some programs on climate change attract very specific, already-engaged audiences, such as the plays of Anouk Nuyens or Marjolijn Heemstra. However, they also have programs like the *HOT-evenings*, where all different HNT visitors can come together. Like DTHT, this wide range of programming gives

⁷⁶ Marras et al., “A Case Study of an Inclusive Museum: The National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari Becomes “Liquid,”” 101.

⁷⁷ “HNTonbeperkt,” hnt.nl, last accessed June 4 2020 via <https://www.hnt.nl/voorstellingen/themas/216/HNTonbeperkt/>

⁷⁸ Welcome to the Village, “Jaarverslag 2019,” 21.

them the possibility to reach a diverse audience: “The pond from which we fish is large because we focus on that.”

Furthermore, the director of DTHT, De Jong, sees the overarching goal of their programming on climate change as something that inherently deals with accessibility: it is about “making it feel palpable, understandable, and giving you the idea it concerns you [...] providing you with confidence to speak about this topic.” This comes forth from De Jong’s belief that the cultural sector must embrace its democratic function, creating programs where people “can sharpen their minds, reflect, a place for the formation of thoughts.” DTHT has no traditional theater halls but ‘liquid’ rooms with moving stages and a garden. This opens up the possibility for various kinds of programming and invites interaction, both with the audience and between disciplines. The program *Expeditie Groen 2020* is also explicitly participatory. Focusing on the democratic and participatory programs could be seen as an interpretation of Van Oost’s characteristic of liquid organization of blurring the boundaries between audience and collection.⁷⁹ Similarly, WTTV has the program frame, *Co-creation*, to record how “audience and society become partners in the creative process.”⁸⁰ This is especially visible at Het DORP; the summer school organized the week before the festival. During Het DORP, diverse people collaborate on sustainable innovations that will be tested during the festival. WTTV sees themselves as ‘a connector’: “we connect links that normally don’t meet.” On the website of WTTV, Het DORP is described as “a collection of links.” With this, they try to make the connections made are more important than the element itself.

Finally, HNT tries to blur the boundary between the audience and the collection using the ‘makers philosophy’ as a foundation for all their activities. This philosophy entails seeing the audience as a maker and is inspired by the small company *Gebied B* from theater maker Karlijn Benthem.⁸¹ The programs of Interaction and Education focus not on the performance, but on what the audience wants to “send into the world” after they interpreted what they saw on stage. Sterrenburg: “We do not have ready-made programs. We have a start experience; subsequently, we explore a theme or questions, and always ends by creating a presentation, or exposition or podcast, etcetera.” With this philosophy, they embody the “chameleon-like ability” to connect the programs to their visitors’ needs. Simultaneously, there are also

⁷⁹ Van Oost, “Living Lab Methodology in Museum Studies: An Exploration,” 486.

⁸⁰ Welcome to the Village, “Jaarverslag 2019,” 14.

⁸¹ For more information see <http://www.gebied-b.nl/>

programs where “the visitor really is an audience, and is taken along with the thoughts of other people,” as exemplified during the *HOT-evenings*, director Debets explained.⁸²

In conclusion, it seems that blurring the boundaries between collection and audience in event-based cultural institutions primarily translates to a focus on participatory programs. Ideologically, there is little room for traditional “Blackbox theater” with a passive audience, from which Verhoeff expressed the belief that it will disappear in the future. However, in practice, all three institutions have programs where an audience can be passive and receiving. Likewise, they make sure their selection of programs is diverse to supply a diverse audience, but they do not aim to make every single program for a diverse audience. All three institutions focus on inclusivity, embracing the cultural sector's democratic function.

4.3.3 Relation to the world outside

Liquid institutions are characterized by being part of networks, collaborating, being open to different values, opinions, and rationales. This section will describe how the cases studies embody this attitude and attempt to blur the borders between the institution and society.

The director of HNT explained they connect closely to the urban environment with their programming, “We try to nourish ourselves with what is happening in society.” In comparison, Bosch formulated it as “we try to react to what happens in society, by thinking something about it. Not necessarily having an opinion, but opening it up for conversation.” This is a thin line, he explained. “Often need to have an opinion to think something, while we want to stick with the facts, offer hope, and look at the future.” When asked how they transfer what is tested during the festival to society, Bosch said “that responsibility lies with the government and the people themselves,” suggesting the festival's influence ends at its borders.

All three institutions describe a close connection to the local community and collaborate with experts, partners, municipalities, national green networks, and their audience for their programming on climate change and their search to become sustainable. It is presented as a given and comes forth from inclusivity being the norm, as discussed in the previous section. For collaborating with experts on the issue of climate change, the interviewees gave similar reasons. They were based on outsourcing activism, borrowing

⁸² For more information about the *HOT-evenings* see <https://www.theater.nl/is-hot-avonden-het-nationale-theater/?acceptCookies=600451cf421eb>

knowledge, and connecting the institution's programs back to society. Sterrenburg explained that inviting experts is necessary because “it is always important to avoid navel-gazing.” The same expression was used by Verhoeff, explaining that people engaging with climate change feel the need for having a scientific foundation. Therefore, it is attractive to collaborate with a science institute or other partner, which is unnecessary when addressing subjects as love or bullying. The level of dependency on these networks and collaborations, however, differs. When asked why DTHT is a suitable institution to address climate change, the director of DTHT brought up having a “small and agile team” that relies on “a large group of other organizations, parties, makers, and partners with whom they give meaning to the program.” Without their network, DTHT could not exist. Similarly, WTTV is suitable to engage with climate change because of its collaborations. By setting the ambitious goal to become circular in 2022, they started attracting interesting green connections that help them engage with climate change. Finally, although HNT is part of many collaborations, it was less emphasized; Debets mentioned it during the interview as being part of these networks was so evident for HNT, it was barely necessary to discuss suggesting it was of lesser importance: “You have all those Greenkey and green whatever, I think we participate in most of them.”

In sum, the three case studies actively interact with society by letting themselves be inspired by their environment and collaborating with diverse partners. Through these collaborations, they open themselves up to different ideas and perspectives. The more dependent on partners and networks, the more porous the institution's borders become; however, this also means less autonomy and decentralization. Furthermore, as the institutions seem more focused on reacting to society than influencing society, the institution's borders are more porous from society towards the institution than the other way around.

4.3.4 (Re)presentation

Dealing with the paradoxes and ambiguities of climate change requires embracing conflicting forces' plurality and giving dynamic and partial answers, and working towards a future in which we interact with the nonhuman. This section will discuss how the three institutions (re)present this move away from anthropocentrism, the focus on the future, and the paradoxes and ambiguities that make climate change a troublesome topic.

DTHT is the only institution that explicitly moves away from anthropocentrism by stating they strive for ‘radical inclusivity’ in their mission and vision statement. Although this is currently a ‘point of reference’ rather than a requirement, it is an explicit attempt to “see

and present a world as one enmeshed and shared with many human and nonhuman entities.”⁸³ WTTV addresses this focus on the nonhuman implicitly, with their goal of becoming circular by 2020. By finding a way for all materials, water, and food to be recycled, they tend to the nonhuman entities that play a role during the festival. The same applies to HNT’s search to become sustainable, although this is currently only the case for one and not all of their programs. All three institutions explicitly focus on the future, whereby WTTV and DHTH describe themselves as a ‘society’ and ‘workplace’ for the future. This future-orientation seems inherently connected to a focus on sustainability issues like climate change, for example, by asking the question: “Which world do we leave behind for our children?” This suggests the temporal shift to the future climate change demands seems less challenging for time-based institutions as theaters, cultural centers, and festivals than for space-based institutions as museums.

To what extent they see climate change as a problematic issue for programming, differed per person rather than per institution. Debets said that addressing issues like inclusivity or diversity is more comfortable because “you can connect to certain makers. [...] In the Netherlands, there are currently no theater companies that solely engage in this issue.” Secondly, Verhoeff referred to the issue’s fragmentation: “I think it is difficult to address climate change, because of the many approaches and views on how the world should look. With so many nuances, you can easily disagree. While, projects on inclusivity, for example, have the same clear end goal.” Thirdly, De Jong made the general observation climate change’s challenge “feels very abstract and far away.” She elaborated, saying, as climate change is viewed as a technical, economic, and financial problem for a long time, it seems as predominately experts should play a role. Verhoeff and Sterrenburg embodied this concern explaining “it is difficult, as I am not expert. When the focus is on the factual data... That is not me” and “it feels like you need to be a scientist to choose a side.” Verhoeff feels this might also influence the makers: “People are less confident to just base programs on their feelings. As things can be factually wrong, they are less free to talk.” Simultaneously, all interviewees approached climate change as a social issue, focusing on human values. Therefore, Sterrenburg feels it is not a difficult topic at all, expressing the belief that “everything is possible.” Similarly, Bosch explained, “it is always possible to open up a discussion on themes [like climate change] by booking a program discussing something. We

⁸³ Cameron, “The Liquid Museum,” 351.

can meet the social aspect of society's sustainability." For him, the difficulties relate to the technical aspects of becoming circular and sustainable. Often they need to take smaller steps than they hoped: "We do want things, but sometimes it is not possible because the technique is not there, or it is legally not allowed," like recycling toilet water.

Finally, it was striking how often the term 'imaginings' was mentioned in the year reports and interviews of DTHT. The programmer of DTHT explained that since there already exist places where people can tell stories on a stage, they needed to find a niche by making other kinds of programs: "It is about imagination and encounters instead of putting someone on the stage. It is about doing something." In this way, they practice Žižek's "future-present trajectory."⁸⁴ Focusing on the experience instead of the information is another way to practice this future-present trajectory and deal with the paradoxes, ambiguities, and uncertainties. Last year WWTV changed its audience approach in this direction: "Where in previous years we mainly wanted to tell and explain how we want to make the world a bit more beautiful, we now want to make you feel it: We move from the head to the stomach. We use fewer museum signs, so to speak, but aim for more collective experiences."⁸⁵ This connects to Cameron, Hodge, and Salazar's recommendation that "museums need to offer less information" and "richer experiences."⁸⁶

All three cultural institutions focus on the future, connected to the need to engage with climate change and see climate change as a social issue. All interviewees personally struggle with the issue's complexity and fragmentation. However, relying on experiences, imagination, and viewing climate change as a social issue gives them the feeling everything is possible in the programming. The difficulties lie in dealing with the nonhuman elements: governmental and legal restrictions limit the progress in becoming sustainable and circular, and there exists no guide for making music programs radically inclusive.

4.3.5 Reinventing and reorganizing

At the foundation of the liquid institution lies the ability to reorganize and to reinvent oneself. This section will discuss how the three case studies attempt to constantly update their ideology, activities, techniques, and theoretical foundations to adapt to the needs of society, their employees, visitors, and current affairs.

⁸⁴ Žižek, *Living in the End Times*.

⁸⁵ Welcome to the Village, "Jaarverslag 2019," 28.

⁸⁶ Cameron, Hodge, and Salazar, "Representing Climate Change in Museum Space and Places," 17.

Bosch explained that the advantage of being a festival is that they can reinvent themselves every year. Bosch emphasizes this difference at the end of his interview when he compares WTTV to other institutions such as HNT and DTHT: “We are relatively young, so we can relatively quickly modify our content. DTHT is a continuous organization that is relatively difficult to change because there are rules, laws, departments, etcetera. We do not have that; we are just 20 people who enjoy doing something. Moreover, if we think it should be different, we do it.” The aim to keep innovating is anchored in Het DORP, which Bosch describes as “a place where people come together who want to think about change, without boundaries about how it could be different.” They organize it as a ‘living lab,’ thereby illustrating how part of Van Oost's proposal for a methodology could work in practice. Moreover, WTTV has been founded to contribute to a sustainable world. Hence, it has a different starting position than the other two institutions that later started relating to this issue. DTHT is currently reinventing themselves through their new mission and vision statement. Also, the need for innovation is embodied by the fourth programming pillar, *Cultural renewal*. Verhoeff explains cultural renewal as “people who engage with podcasts, VR, the location... People who want to have a conversation instead of watching someone on a stage.” She sees a close connection between cultural renewal and addressing climate change, “as both address a certain innovation.”

All the interviewees recognized there are currently large developments happening in our society related to climate change: from school marches to restaurants that cook with local, sustainable, and seasonable ingredients to the normalization of being vegan. Although society now perceives climate change perceived as a ‘hot’ topic, we do not know how this will be in the future. Verhoeff expressed being worried about the fact that “the whims of urgency change”: “it seems like every four years there are different themes important which prohibit the formation of long lines in programming.” When asked whether she thinks addressing climate change will still be in their mission and vision in four years, she said: “I find it extremely difficult that you ask about that, but I hope for god’s sake that this theme stays, that it will not bore us, that the urgency stays visible. However, we are currently in a new crisis, so I do not know.” Sterrenburg also brought up the issue of “themes go through society in waves.” However, as it is clear we need to change, she does not think it is a topic that will disappear but predicts the approach might change. With the play *The Children*, climate change was the central theme for context programming. In the future, it could be “more woven into projects.” For example, in programs on identity for young people, climate change will be addressed indirectly because it is part of their world. Strikingly, all three

institutions aim to incorporate climate change into the identity of the organization. How far along they are in this process differs. Bosch emphasized this in the interview, saying we “do not really engage in climate programming, because it is part of our DNA, and that is what we feel is most important.” Recently they also decided to let go of choosing a concrete and tangible theme for their yearly focus like ‘diversity,’ and replacing it with a more philosophical theme as “the myth of Chronos and Kairos.” In this way, they can indirectly address things like climate change by discussing, for example, whether the laws and rules that were invented 500 years ago are still applicable. De Jong expressed a desire to take on a similar attitude for DTHT as WTTV has now: “My goal, but I just started, of course, is that it will be in the DNA of everything we do.” HNT also pursues an integral approach in addressing climate change by making all the different aspects of the organization sustainable. The artistic director Eric de Vroed has started this new direction for HNT, the play *The Children* functioning as a catalyzer. Sterrenburg expressed the worry that this play's sustainable production could become a gimmick that will be forgotten next year when they move on to a different play. She expressed the wish to connect a group of youngsters to HNT, “to analyze everything they do to the climate issue metrics” to avoid this from happening. This suggests sustainability is on its way to become part of the DNA of HNT, although it is not yet included in their mission statement. Strikingly, Bosch specifically said at the end of the interview that not all cultural institutions should incorporate sustainability into their core structure: “if it is not part of the DNA, it does not necessarily need to become part of your DNA.” Like with inclusivity, he is afraid it could become a restriction: “If a cultural institution has another mission, for example, simply to make excellent plays, they should be able to overstep the limits of climate change, to open up the conversation or achieve something bigger.”

In sum, the characteristic of reorganization and reinventing oneself is most clearly embodied by WTTV, a festival format that revolves around innovation. The THT focuses on innovation by programming cultural renewal. They are currently in the process of reinventing themselves, going through an explicitly liquid phase. HNT, on the other hand, engages both in more innovating and more traditional projects. They will need to implement tools to ensure the innovative processes related to climate change will be continued in the future. Climate change demands long lines and continuous engagement. However, as the interviewees emphasized, you cannot make programs on the same theme for years. Becoming liquid and engaging with climate requires a holistic or integral approach. It is more than climate programming; it is something an institution relates to implicitly in everything it does.

5 Conclusion

5.1 General conclusion

This thesis set out to answer the question: *How are cultural institutions 'liquid' in the way they respond to and engage with the complex issue of climate change?* Building on the concept of 'staying with the trouble' and the literature on 'liquid museums,' this thesis explored how event-based cultural institutions can be liquid when engaging climate change. After analyzing how a theater, a cultural center, and a festival engage with the complex trouble of climate change, this study can draw some first conclusions on how liquidity manifests in diverse cultural institutions. The mission, size, and history of the institution play thereby an essential role.

HNT shows how a large institution consisting of many departments exemplifies the characteristics of a liquid institution. They frame their engagement with climate change as part of a search to become sustainable, both in how they care for the environment as for their buildings, productions, employees, and audience. As they are a large organization, part of the Dutch theater sector's cumbersome system, they are limited in some ways and advantaged in others. HNT has to work with existing structures that can cause internal friction and inhibit sudden large changes. The primary liquefying tool of HTN is the department Interaction and Education. It is designed to be flexible and build bridges between the art and society, as it explores what the underlying themes of the plays mean for the audience. The department builds on the 'makers philosophy,' providing a strategy to blur the boundary between the collection and the audience. They have the advantage of having many resources, both in personnel as in physical locations, so that they can create a wide range of programming for a large audience. Moreover, as they both produce and present, they have the autonomy to influence the entire production chain and to be decentralized in their decision-making. The play *The Children* has functioned as a kick-starter, a catalyzer of their engagement with climate change, the thematic line *Stewardship's* installment, and the 'greening' of the production process. However, it does not guarantee the same standard will be held for future productions.

DTHT illustrates how a cultural center with a small and agile team embodies liquidity in a completely different way. The motivation to make DTHT a catalyst for an "inclusive and fossil-free future" is provoked by the gardens' previously functioning as Shell's canteen. DTHT most explicitly describes the goal to stay with the complex trouble of climate change from the three institutions, as their new mission and vision statement evolves around radical

inclusivity. With this, they actively installed an incentive to reinvent themselves. THT frames climate change as a social and accessibility issue, most clearly embodied by the liquid program line *Expeditie Groen 2020*. DTHT's foundation possesses two liquefying elements: the location and the team. First, DTHT building and location qualities are unique: a large garden, multifunctional halls with moving stages without a stand, located in Amsterdam's greenest city district. These open spaces invite interaction, give space to cultural renewal, stimulate a focus on innovation and a liquid relation with the audience. Second, with a small agile team of like-minded people, they naturally have an updated administration. This means little internal friction and the possibility to make quick internal changes. Moreover, by depending and collaborating with diverse cultural and green organizations, they force themselves to be open to different perspectives and ideas. However, as the slow implementation of the new mission and vision shows, it takes time to implement these changes in their external relations.

WTTV exemplifies how an institution can be founded on liquid terms: A group of volunteers working from the philosophy of creating together without hierarchies focused on challenging existing rules and laws, i.e., the exemplar of an updated administration. However, as they expanded, they had to implement some solid structures to ensure the organization's permanence independent of its founders. Different than the other two institutions, WTTV engaged with climate change since its foundation. Liquidity is manifested in the following aspects: First, in the drive to remove rules, restrictions, and boundaries. Second, the search to become circular in 2022 illustrates how a cultural institution can move away from the anthropocentric worldview by taking the institution's nonhuman elements into account. Third, being a festival has the advantage that it can reinvent itself every year. However, this only happens when the festival focuses on innovating. Het DORP thereby functions as a 'liquefier,' inspiring interaction, and a focus on innovation. It is a concrete example of a project that works as an assemblage and illustrates how a living lab can be connected to a cultural institution. Finally, different than the other two institutions, WTTV does not think about climate change as a separate issue or program line. This illustrates the holistic approach of WTTV that the other two institutions aspire to incorporate in the future.

By analyzing the similarities between the three case studies, this thesis can add some nuances to the liquidity concept as described in the literature. First, by activating this concept in the context of diverse cultural institutions, this study shows that cultural institutions that evolve around time-based events cultural might be better equipped to engage with the dynamics of climate change than museums. The theater, festival, and cultural center generally

focus more on the present and future rather than the past, making it easier to program in the ‘future-present.’ Furthermore, when organizing time-based events, participatory programs can easily blur the boundaries between collection and audience. Similarly, cultural institutions that rely on music or theater events do not rely on a positivist frame of certainty or have a primary focus on conveying information or present supposedly neutral statements. This shows that some institutions are typically more liquid than others. Second, the framework specifies liquid institutions function as assemblages, meaning not all separate elements have to be, and not one element can make an institution liquid. The interaction between the elements determines the liquidity, i.e., the underlying attitude, which has to be intrinsically motivated and cannot be imposed. The case studies confirmed interactive programs that embrace the complexity, ambiguity, and paradoxes can exist next to traditional programs such as a Shakespeare play. On the other hand, the analysis suggests some elements can function as ‘liquefiers,’ for example, the department Education and Interaction of HNT or Het DORP of WTTV. Liquefiers provide incentives to innovate and fuel the attitude required to stay with the trouble. Finally, a lack of clarity in role division and stability over time can also lead to chaos. When attempting to fit an institution in the framework of liquidity, it could seem like the more liquid an institution is, the better it is adapted to engage with climate change. However, a comparison between the three case studies illustrates how being liquid requires balancing, a constant trade-off between attaining decentralization and autonomy and merging in networks and collaborations. The larger an organization grows, the easier it can change society; however, the more difficult it gets to make internal changes. It is a never-ending process of balancing the liquid and the solid.

This thesis contributes to the existing research on liquid museums, composing a coherent framework suitable for mapping and analyzing how diverse cultural institutions are liquid in how they engage with climate change. The case studies’ analysis shows how the liquid institution's theory works in practice, illustrating how different cultural institutions can embody liquidity in diverse ways. The lens of the liquidity framework has been productive in mapping how the three cases engage with climate change in terms of mission, vision, hopes, plans, and struggles, in other words, how the institutions reflect on themselves, their audience, and the world. Framing liquidity as an answer to Haraway’s call to stay with the trouble provides context for this view's origin, and specificity, coherence, and meaning to the framework. Simultaneously, it placed the thesis in an activist context. Stating cultural institutions need to stay with the trouble is politically charged: cultural institutions are not just informing or entertaining but guiding in the societal debate on climate change. A role

that not all cultural institutions want to play. On the other hand, this thesis contributed to Haraway's work by providing a concrete framework to map and analyze how cultural institutions can stay with the trouble. Haraway explains staying with the trouble requires engaging with the ruins of the Chthulucene, in other words, addressing the issue without feeling overwhelmed or feeling the need to give up. Although the institutions experience restrictions by governmental rules and technical (in)possibilities in their search to become sustainable, all three expressed the feeling "everything is possible" in the programming. Analyzing the similarities between the case studies suggest this attitude was created by viewing climate change as a social issue, using the imagination as a tool, focusing on creating experiences over presenting information, and using positive framing, i.e., showing how it could be done differently instead of pointing out what goes wrong. This attitude should be incorporated into the institution's DNA as a way to stay with the trouble.

5.2 Limitations and suggestions for future research

It is essential to add some side notes and address the limitations of this study. This research takes place in the Netherlands and relies on studies conducted in other Western countries, like Australia and the US, based on availability. So, the conclusions of this thesis are localized to these contexts. Furthermore, all interviews were conducted in Dutch. For the analysis, I translated the quotes into English. However, the nuances and subtleties of specific terms and expressions could be lost in translation. The original transcripts are available on request. Also, as liquid institutions are characterized by change, the analysis is time specific to spring 2020, when the interviews were conducted. Finally, as 'liquidity' and 'staying with the trouble' can be considered holistic theories, they can explain everything, and thereby nothing. To tackle this, I tried to devise a framework making the themes as concrete as possible, using case studies to illustrate different implementation possibilities. However, as the case studies are used illustratively, the framework's focus largely determines the outcomes. In this section, I will point out several relevant aspects that remained out of sight.

First, as the lens of liquidity analyzes the activities on an institutional level, this thesis does not assess the effectiveness of specific approaches or programs in the way they engage with climate change. Analyzing the institutions through the online presentation and interviews reinforced this, meaning the institutions image and reflections were analyzed rather than the institution itself. The interviewees could have given socially desirable answers, which is, for example, suggested by Debets, emphasizing "the board finds engaging with climate change extremely important." The analysis could thereby provide an image that

is slightly more favorable than reality. Also, this means the gaps in knowledge of the interviewees became the gaps of knowledge of this thesis. In the future, different methods and lenses are necessary to analyze the institution directly. A follow-up study using an ethnographic approach could deepen the insight of the daily practice and struggles of people working in liquid institutions; a study using the lens of business administration could map a liquid institutions' organizational model and accompanying power relations, and a case study analysis focusing on specific events can explore the practical implementation the underlying attitude mapped in this study. Second, in this thesis, liquid institutions are seen as adaptable and thereby reactive. Hence, it is challenging to address the agenda-setting role that liquid institutions need to play; what will they do when the 'whims or urgency' change and climate change is no longer a 'hot' topic? Moreover, this thesis focuses on what happens within the borders of the institution. The political context is, therefore, underexposed. Future research is necessary to broaden the conclusions exploring what role political relations play in subsidized institutions or the government's role in creating these institutions: What type of governing can create a climate suitable for founding and reforming liquid institutions? Finally, although climate change is unique in how it influences all aspects of society, the liquid institution's framework could be applied to explore institutions' engagement with other issues than climate change and institutions outside the cultural sector. It would be interesting to explore whether liquid institutions' framework could be connected to concepts other than staying with the trouble, making it less or more political. In sum, this study is exploratory, and the conclusions should be treated accordingly. Borrowing Haraway's terminology, this thesis functions as a starting point for other studies to follow the tentacles this study has touched upon, in-depth and in-width. In other words, suggestions for future research should be followed to both deepen and broaden the findings.

5.3. Reflection on the impact of COVID-19 on this thesis

The restriction and uncertainties of the current COVID-19 pandemic require unprecedented adaptability for me as a student, an intern, and a person. As I work in intra-action with my environment, doing case study research rather than working in a lab, this unavoidably influenced my research and its process: As my internship was delayed, I could not rely on my experience in the work field to guide my research focus as I initially planned; most contact, both interviews as well as guidance were online, and at times felt that the lack of direction in daily life caused my educational process and planning to be elusive and often changing as well. Although I cannot know whether this would have been different in 'normal'

circumstances, it seems that in liquid times, my research became a little liquid itself. Moreover, this was the case for cultural institutions' daily practice, as the cultural sector itself was suddenly shut down for an indefinite period, unable to do what they were founded to do, uncertain of receiving financial support.

'Liquidity' refers to the readiness to change. The cultural institutions' ability to change to this new, unprecedented circumstance could be interpreted as a test of their liquidity. Although this was not the focus of this study, the topic came up in all the interviews, and I believe it to be an addition to this thesis in showing how the theoretical frame of liquid institutions could be applied in other contexts than the climate issue. When the interviews were conducted, between April 24 and May 11, 2020, all cultural institutions were closed, and it was unsure when and how they could reopen. Especially HNT acted quickly in taking these circumstances as a reason to create their most liquid program so far: *HNT speelt altijd*. This program's starting point is to make things sizable, so they will not depend on the government's measures. Debets recognizes it as a liquid approach, in that they adapt to what is possible:

We make a monologue that can be performed by one person, if necessary, in a car in front of someone's door. The 670 chairs of the Koninklijke Schouwburg cannot be used any time soon. With 1.5 meter there can fit 137 people in the Koninklijke Schouwburg, that is budgetary impossible; but we do not look at what is impossible but explore what is possible for those 137 people. Maybe outside the theaters, maybe in parks or sports halls, where there is much room for few people.

The creation of *HNT Speelt altijd* was only possible because they had liquid tools implemented in the institution to work with and are decentralized in controlling the entire production chain. DTHT has a garden and is one of few cultural institutions in Amsterdam with continuous summer programming, so at the time of the interview they were busy looking at possibilities, but it proved to be very difficult. When asked whether they thought they had an advantage as they are focused on innovation, Verhoeff said, "If we were further with this mission and vision, we might have an advantage, but for now it was too early." This suggests that DTHT is still at the beginning of the liquefaction process. Finally, the pandemic also exposed some rigid restrictions to liquid institutions: a festival whose primary purpose is to bring people together can never thrive in an online, distancing world, as Bosch explained. However, a couple of months later, both DTHT and WTTV showed they kept sensing and probing to what was possible. The festival is moved to 2021, but they still

organized Het DORP in fall 2020. Likewise, DTHT organized live streams, garden sessions, artistic repair shops, and kept on searching for ways to engage with their audience. It illustrates how being liquid means doing what is possible, keep engaging with ruins instead of giving up: a manifestation of what Haraway means by staying with the trouble.

6 Bibliography

- Barad, Karen. *Meeting the Universe Halfway. Meeting the Universe Halfway*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2007.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.
- Cameron, Fiona. "The Liquid Museum." *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies: Museum Theory*, no. 2006 (2015): 345–61.
- Cameron, Fiona, Bob Hodge, and Juan Francisco Salazar. "Representing Climate Change in Museum Space and Places." *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 4, no. 1 (January 2013): 9–21. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.200>.
- Carr, David. *The Promise of Cultural Institutions*. Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2003.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. "A Thousand Plateaus." In *Course in General Linguistics*, edited by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, 378–86. Maiden, Oxford and Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 1998.
- Galle, Nadine, and Sabine. De Haes. "Welcome to the Circular Village." Amsterdam, 2017.
- Global, IGI. "What Is Cultural Institutions," n.d. <https://www-igi-global-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/dictionary/the-relationships-between-cultural-institutions-and-companies/39245>.
- Gonçalves, Juan. "The Liquid Museum: A Museum That Seeks To Adapt To Its Community." *European Journal of Arts*, 2018.
- . "The 'Liquid Museum': A Relational Museum That Seeks to Adapt to Today's Society." *The Museum Review* 4, no. 1 (2019): 1–11.
- Grundmann, Reiner. "Climate Change as a Wicked Social Problem." *Nature Geoscience* 9, no. 8 (2016): 562–63.
- Haraway, Donna. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press, 2016.
- Het Nationaal Theater. "Het Nationale Theater in Oprichting." Den Haag, n.d.
- . "Inhoudelijk Verslag Producties, Programmering, Programma's En Educatie 2018." Den Haag, 2018.
- Kaliska, Monika; "Report on the Role of Public Arts and Cultural Institutions in the Promotion of Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue 2011-2014," 2014.
- Law Insider. "Cultural Institution." Accessed August 21, 2020. <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/cultural-institution>.
- Lawrence, Mark. "No Silver Bullet Against Climate Change." *Institute for Advanced*

- Sustainability Studies*, December 19, 2018.
- Marras, Anna Maria, Maria Gerolama Messina, Donatella MuredduRomoli, and Elena Romoli. "A Case Study of an Inclusive Museum: The National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari Becomes "Liquid"." In *Cultural Heritage in a Changing World*, edited by Jan Karol Borowiecki, Neil Forbes, and Antonella Fresa, 99–110. Zurich: Springer International Publishing, 2016.
- Mills, Albert, Gabrielle Durepos, and Elden Wiebe. "Exploratory Case Study." *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*, 2013, 372–73.
- Moser, Susanne C. "Communicating Adaptation to Climate Change: The Art and Science of Public Engagement When Climate Change Comes Home." *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 5, no. 3 (2014): 337–58.
- Nail, Thomas. "What Is an Assemblage?" *Sub-Stance* 46, no. 142 (2017): 21–37.
- Oost, Olga Van. "Living Lab Methodology in Museum Studies: An Exploration." *The Transformative Museum*, no. May (2012): 482–93.
- Oregon Law. "Cultural Institution," 2007.
https://www.oregonlaws.org/glossary/definition/cultural_institution.
- Parsons, Sarah. "2020 Is a Critical Year for Climate Action, These Are the Challenges Ahead." *Global Center on Adaptation*, January 24, 2020.
- Pierson, Jo, and Bram Lievens. "Configuring Living Labs For A 'Thick' Understanding Of Innovation." *Ethnographic Praxis in Industry Conference Proceedings* 2005, no. 1 (2005): 114–27.
- Pollitt, Christopher. "Debate: Climate Change—the Ultimate Wicked Issue." *Public Money and Management* 36, no. 2 (2016): 78–80.
- "Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on the Impacts of Global Warming of 1.50C above Pre- Industrial Levels," 2018.
- "Report of the Secretary-General on the 2019 Climate Summit and the Way Forward In," 2020.
- Roosen, Liselotte J., Christian A. Klöckner, and Janet K. Swim. "Visual Art as a Way to Communicate Climate Change: A Psychological Perspective on Climate Change–Related Art." *World Art* 8, no. 1 (2018): 85–110.
- Rubin, Herbert, and Irene Rubin. "The First Phase of Analysis: Preparing Transcripts and Coding Data." In *Qualitative Interviewing (2nd Ed.): The Art of Hearing Data*, 201–23. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012.
- Sage Research Methods. "Semi-Structured Interview." *The SAGE Encyclopedia of*

Qualitative Research Methods, 2020.

Sommer, Laura Kim, Janet Kay Swim, Anna Keller, and Christian Andreas Klöckner.

“‘Pollution Pods’: The Merging of Art and Psychology to Engage the Public in Climate Change.” *Global Environmental Change* 59, no. October (2019): 101992.

Tolhuistuin. “Bestuursverslag 2018.” Amsterdam, 2018.

Tuin, Iris Van der, and Rick Dolphijn. *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2012.

Welcome to the Village. “Jaarverslag 2019.” Leeuwarden, 2020.

Yin, Robert K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage., 2014.

Žižek, Slavoj. *Living in the End Times*. London: Verso, 2010.

Websites

<https://www.hnt.nl/>

<https://www.tolhuistuin.nl/>

<https://welcometothevillage.nl/>

<http://www.gebied-b.nl/>

<https://wearewarmingup.nl/>

7 Appendices

Appendix A Topics list

Context

1. The role of the interviewee

At the beginning of the interview, it is crucial to set the context for the conversation that will take place. With this topic, I emphasize that I am interviewing the person from their professional position, not their personal view. In addition, by asking to situate their cultural institution within the Dutch cultural sector, it places this research in the Dutch context.

Questions: What is your role within the institution? Does this role give you the ability to say something about the programming on climate change on an institutional level? How does this cultural institution fit within the Dutch cultural field?

Topics to map how they relate to climate change

2. Formalized strategies

To get insight into how the cultural institutions deal with climate change, the most straightforward approach is discussing any formalized strategies they have in place when addressing climate change as a topic for their programming.

Questions: Do you have guidelines or policies for how you want to address climate change in specific programs and/or through your practices as an institution in general?

3. Motivation

Research has shown increasing recognition and interest in the possible positive impact of arts on society, whereby the cultural sector has started to embrace the economic and social rationales, next to the cultural and aesthetic rationales as motivations to create (Reeves, 2002). This topic maps the motivation and initial relation of the institution with the issue of climate change.

Questions: What is the relation of your institution with the topic climate? What is your motivation to engage with climate change? Why do you feel the need to address climate change with programming instead of just setting sustainability goals?

4. Climate change in relation to mission and vision

After the first interview, I realized, directors tend to repeat parts of the mission and vision statement in the interview. In order to deepen the insights from the online research, instead of just repeating them, I ask the interviewees to reflect and elaborate on the role of climate change in their mission and vision statement.

Questions: How do you reflect on these aspects of the mission and vision? How did they come to be? How does this work in practice? Do you have an example?

5. Characteristics of the institution

In the article by Cameron (2015) on liquid museums, she discusses how five dynamic forces of our current society challenge how we have conceptualized modern museums. The temporal frame of museums was, for example, focused on the past, while climate change demands a shift to the future. Discussing how well other

cultural institutions are suited (in their opinion) to address climate change with their programming effectively addresses my research question in the interview.

Questions: Why is it necessary that an institution as yours addresses climate change? What makes your institution the right place to tell stories on climate change? Furthermore, what characteristics make it challenging to tell stories on climate change within your institution's context? Are there things you would like to change?

Topics to address liquidity.

6. Organizational structure

This topic is devised to map how engaging with climate change fits the institution's organizational structure. This topic thereby addresses the first level of a liquid institution described in the third chapter: Having an updated administration enables decentralization and autonomy.

Questions: Who engages with climate programming within the institution? Do you have a separate sustainability department or rely on a more integral approach? Are your programmers free to follow their own interests, or do you have specific guidelines? Is there something that connects all your activities related to climate change?

7. Relation with the audience

This topic addresses the target audience and the audience approach of the institution focused on climate programs. It is devised to address the second level of a liquid institution described in the third: Liquid institutions have an open, interactive relation with the audience, evolving around accessibility and inclusivity.

Questions: For you do you make the climate programs? Do you succeed in reaching them? Do you want to be a safe place for like-minded people or bring different perspectives together? Do you have a message, do you want to convince them of something? How do you focus on accessibility?

8. Networks and collaborations

I started my research from the observation that there seems to be a trend of more and more cultural initiatives addressing climate change. Warming Up 2020 presents itself as the first large scale Dutch project that will attempt to connect all these initiatives in a national network. As many organizations have already indicated they wanted to join, this raises the question of why many organizations feel this need for creating networks and collaborations when addressing climate change, maybe more than for other themes. This topic maps the third level of a liquid institution relation to the world outside

Questions: Why did you decide to join Warming Up? Does addressing climate change specifically stimulate you to collaborate and create networks within the cultural sector or even cross-sectors?

9. Climate change as a 'difficult' theme

As climate change is an issue, you always touch upon other topics depending upon the frame you use. Focusing on a more subjective aspect of the cultural institutions' program on climate change, I want to zoom in on how the cultural institutions frame climate change, whether they have grouped it with other themes, or what this depends on. This topic thereby addresses the fourth level of a liquid institution: (re)presentation.

Questions: How does the theme of climate change relate to the other themes the cultural institution addresses? What frame do you use to address climate change? What are the difficulties of climate programming? Do you have advice for other institutions?

10. Place in society

Liquid institutions are placed within society and not above it. This means they interact with its actualities, constantly adapting to new circumstances. This topic addresses the fifth level of a liquid institution: Liquidity institutions need to keep evolving and updating themselves. This topic also touches upon how the institution relates to the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 crisis we are currently experiencing.

Questions: What do you see as the role of your institution within society? How do you relate to actualities? Can the institution quickly react to new circumstances? How do you reflect on your ability to adapt to the circumstances related to COVID-19?

Appendix B Codes scheme

Relation to institution
Role in society
Place in cultural field
Artistic profile and climate change
- Programming
Climate change as theme
- Motivation and goals
- Difficulties
Organizational structure
- Physical location / halls
- Limitations
Relation to the world outside
- Relation to actualities
- Collaborations
Relation to the audience
- Inclusivity
Representation
Reinventing and reorganizing
- Integral approach
- Limitations and wishes
Corona crisis
Personal attitudes and believes about arts and culture
Figures of speech

Example code scheme: Cees Debets -Director Nationaal Theater in The Hague

NOTE: The interviews were conducted in Dutch. During the coding process I summarized the transcriptions making rough translation. For the analysis, I used this code scheme to compare the three case studies, and relied on the original transcripts for quotes.

Relation to institution

- Director

Role in society

- It is not very big, I would almost say at the moment.
- Our houses exist as community houses

Place in cultural field

- Exist for almost 4 years, at foundations said we wanted to be the biggest traveling theater company of the Netherlands, including youth theater (1)
- National position in the development of theater: revitalizing of the canon, and developing form so a new canon can originate
- Only ones in the Netherlands that have all theater halls available from Zaal 3 to the Koninklijke Schouwburg, and everything in between
- One of three organizations that contain both production and presentation in one hand. Hence, we can influence in the entire production chain. (2)
- Very broad spectrum of makers: Florian Meijer and Joep van het Heck.

Artistic profile and climate change

- Attention to innovation for talent

- Develop the talent of the audience
- Be a leader big societal themes as diversity, inclusivity and sustainability → we want to lead the way in practice and theoretical framework.

Programming

- We do not necessarily choose a theme, rather the artistic content. We are open for makes that wat to relate to this topic
- Very sensitive for everyone who tries to get this topic out of the theoretical frame and connects it to real consequences:
Example Guy Wisemine from het Noordelijk Toneel and Club GuyRony, discover now you can get built a real relation to a local audience whithout being physically present → would limit travel moment, similar de Warme Winkel do play an international play but do not want fly
- Examples Firma MES, Anouk Nuyens, Rutger Bregman

Climate change as theme

- Theme stewardship (1)
- Comes from previous art plan, inspired by approach artistic leader Eric de Vroedt
- Concerned with the question what world do we leave behind for our children
→ Responsibility for the future
- Responsibility for a 225-year-old building, that we want to maintain for another 200 years
- Sustainability refers to climate, but also working condition, fair practice is also a sustainability question
- Very concrete in the play The Children -theme indirectly climate change (2)
Consequences of executing the theme, how can we create a sustainable production
→ You cannot convince the audience if you are not committed backstage as well
- We the children: context program with high schoolers throughout the Netherlands
collaboration with The Correspondent Jelmer Mommers,
- Opening the building for the climate mars
- Not just small education project as a checkbox for the minister but about being visible, tangible.
- Definition: I don't know what kind of definition you use. Do we talk about Anouk Nuyens, or Marjolijn Heemstra -activist call to action towards the audience. Or Firma MES -rather contemplative. In our programming we still search for artistic quality. P. 4
- I think we are open, a stage of the city, a stage of the country, we are open for this kind of thoughts and though experiments.
- It is important, but I cannot yet put my finger on it.

Motivation and goals

- We are not interested in the old-fashioned trainings theater (i.e. vormingstheater)
- I want that for the moment they are inside, they can land in a different world where they can allow themselves to be confronted with different perspectives. That's the maximum you can achieve.
- Some plays I hope people will do a donation, call their mother, talk to a stranger. That really depends. No preconceived goals.

Difficulties

- For inclusivity or diversity, it is easier because than you can connect to certain makers
- Right now, there exist no theater groups yet, that are solely dedicated to this issue.

- Ten years ago, a price was awarded for the most sustainable company, at the beginning of the awareness.

Organizational structure

- As one of three organizations in the Netherlands, we produce and present: we have a stage and a company. So, we have influence in the entire production chain. We cannot, as the habit in the cultural sector, blame others. Excuses as light designer cannot use led lights because theater do not support that not possible because we are everything
Integral approach, from transport to suggesting electric cabs for visitors.
Integral approach, I want reduce plastic etc. We have an example function
However, leads to tensions, no plastic wrapped around the cookies in the break is that hygienic.
- Eric de Vroedt takes the artistic lead for this topic
- ICT and faculty are working on this topic
- We join all kind of networks as green-key and green
- Not one person, as this question goes throughout the organization, but the direction feels it is important

Physical location / halls

- Only ones in the Netherlands that have all theater halls available from Zaal 3 to the Koninklijke Schouwburg, and everything in between
- Responsibility for a 225-year-old building, that we want to maintain for another 200 years
- Groene Grachten, organization in Amsterdam that specializes in making historical buildings sustainable. Often said it can't be done but that is bullshit. Look for creative solutions.
- Close to the urban environment in the programming, want to inspired by what is happening in society
- Therefore, collaborating with social cultural organizations, collaborate with the Moroccan or Surinam community.
- Example, zaal 3 the smallest hall located in an old electricity factory, at the edge of the city. Now cultural breeding place. I live there. We now have a new caterer, for the restaurant of Zaal 3 and he will create a garden together with the neighborhood to grow food for the restaurant where you can eat before the play. Building a new chain, that will connect to the what is happening inside. For example, Marjolein van Heemstra that will create a play inspired by that chain.
- Microlevel.

Limitations

- Theater is one of the slowest artforms that exist
- Difficult to predict when something is going to be current.
- Theater makers are inspired by reality but we need to determine 1.5 year beforehand what we are going to make.
- Corona → next to practical measures we also doubt our program the next season because what themes are relevant in this crisis
- This crisis shows how we keep each other hostage in the Netherlands
- Integral approach, I want reduce plastic etc. We have an example function. However, leads to tensions, no plastic wrapped around the cookies in the break is that hygienic?

Borders of institution

- We do not necessarily choose a theme, rather the artistic content. We are open for makes that want to relate to this topic
- I think we are open, a stage of the city, a stage of the country, we are open for this kind of thoughts and thought experiments. (7)
- Corona: Maybe outside the theaters, maybe in parks, sport halls where there is a lot of room for little people. (10)

Relation to actualities

- Close to the urban environment in the programming, want to inspired by what is happening in society
- To respond to actualities: produce HOT-avonden 5 times a year. P. 3
- Different then the Balie, target a diverse audience. Access to a diverse audience through diversity other programs
- In dialogue with the audience, collaborating with Urgenda, Jelmer Mommers
- Connected to themes from productions
- “Traditional dialogue is the play. [...] a shell of deepening comes to surround it”
- From the department Interaction and Education → flexibility through context programs and these HOT evenings

Collaborations

- The pond from which we fish is large, because we focus on that” (5)
- Lot of contact with neighborhood association, social organizations in the city
- Certain partners guide us. Matthea, Anouk Nuyens, Marjolijn Heemstra. Through the children Education and interaction has good connection with Jelmer Mommers. It is of course an inner circle (een cluppie), that organizes this sort of activities that we think suit as. Like SOS Moira.
- Similarly, we say that we with our houses exist as community houses, we hope to meet and inspire each other often that relates to this kind of themes.
- We join all kind of networks as green-key and green (6)
- Close to the urban environment in the programming, want to inspired by what is p. 7happening in society
- Therefore, collaborating with social cultural organizations, collaborate with the Moroccan or Surinam community.
- Example, Zaal 3 the smallest hall located in an old electricity factory, at the edge of the city. Now cultural breeding place. I live there. We now have a new caterer, for the restaurant of Zaal 3 and he will create a garden together with the neighborhood to grow food for the restaurant where you can eat before the play. Building a new chain, that will connect to the what is happening inside. For example, Marjolein van Heemstra that will create a play inspired by that chain.
- Microlevel.

Relation to audience

Inclusivity

- Develop the talent of the audience (1)
- To respond to actualities: produce HOT-avonden 5 times a year. (3)
- Different then the Balie, target a diverse audience. Access to a diverse audience through diversity other programs
- In dialogue with the audience, collaborating with Urgenda, Jelmer Mommers
- Connected to themes from productions

- From the department Interaction and Education → Flexibility through context programs and these HOT evenings
- Very broad programming. “The pond from which we fish is large, because we focus on that” (5)
- Someone going to Harry Jekkers could be inspired by the HOT evenings
- But Anouk Nuyens or Marjolijn van Heemstra for example attract a very specific theater audience
- Audience is an important party for us.
- Audience important party (7)

Reinventing and reorganizing

Integral approach:

- Very concrete in the play The Children -theme indirectly climate change (2)
Consequences of executing the theme, how can we create a sustainable production
→ You cannot convince the audience if you are not committed backstage as well.
We try to deal with it as integral as possible
- As one of three organizations in the Netherlands, we produce and present: we have a stage and a company. So we have influence in the entire production chain.
- We cannot, as the habit in the cultural sector, blame others.
Excuses as light designer cannot use led lights because theater do not support that not possible because we are everything
- Integral approach, from transport to suggesting electric cabs for visitors.
- Integral approach, I want reduce plastic etc. We have an example function (6)
- However, leads to tensions, no plastic wrapped around the cookies in the break is that hygienic.

Wishes for the future

Corona

- Corona → Next to practical measures we also doubt our program the next season because what themes are relevant in this crisis
- This crisis shows how we keep each other hostage in the Netherlands
- I hope the crisis where we are in now we have a big influence on this question.
- New programming, called HT always plays
- We are going to make things sizable, so we won't be dependable on measurement of the government.
- A liquid approach, in that we adapt to what is possible. We make a monologue, that can be performed by one person, if necessary in a car in front of someone's door. The 670 chairs of the Koninklijke Schouwburg cannot be used in the near future. With 1.5 meter their fit 137 people in the Koninklijke Schouwburg, that is budgetary impossible, but we don't look at what is not possible but explore what is possible for those 137 people.
- Maybe outside the theaters, maybe in parks, sport halls where there is a lot of room for little people.

Figures of speech

- “As Eric de Vroedt often says: I am not an engaged theater maker, but I do engage myself to a certain theme” (2)

- “That is different than at de Balie, where you know that there are 30 people and that is it a sort -It is really great kind of intellectual food, and a discourse can be mapped out. [But] we try break it more open with the HOT-evenings.” (3)
- Kort op de bal spelen: “To observe closely and react rapidly” (3)