

Boston University  
Metropolitan College  
Arts Administration

MET AR 777  
Comparative Cultural Policy  
and Administration

# Seminar

facilitated by Philippe Rixhon  
on Thursday 3 July 2008  
in London

# Prerequisite and agenda

It is assumed that the students have read:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicked\\_problem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicked_problem), and

Camillus, John C. (2008). *Strategy as a Wicked Problem*.  
Harvard Business Review. May 2008. pp. 99-106

The student who is not familiar with the concept of *wicked problem* should not expect to be able to follow and engage at the seminar.

First, we check together if *national cultural policy* and *artistic policy* (the strategy of a cultural institution) are *wicked problems* or not.

Then, we outline the consequences of the findings for the arts administrator and the strategic planning of arts organizations.

# Cultural policy

Cultural policy is understood as the promotion or prohibition of cultural practices and values by governments, corporations, other institutions and individuals.

Such policies may be explicit, in that their objectives are openly described as cultural, or implicit, in that their cultural objectives are concealed or described in other terms.

[ ] a focus on policies relating to culture as symbolic communication rather than to culture in the anthropological sense as "a whole way of life".

*The International Journal of Cultural Policy*

# Corporate strategy > artistic policy

- [ ] corporate strategy is the pattern of decisions in a company that
- 1) shapes and reveals its objectives, purposes, or goals,
  - 2) produces the principal policies and plans for achieving these goals, and
  - 3) defines the business the company intends to be in and the kind of economic and human organization it intends to be.

The strategic decision contributing to this pattern is one that is effective over long periods of time, affects the company in many different ways, and focuses and commits a significant portion of its resources to expected outcomes. The pattern resulting from a series of such decisions will probably define the central character and image of a company, the individuality it has for its members and various publics, and the position it will occupy in its industry and markets.

*C. Roland Christensen*

# Wicked problems

Der Planer, Entwerfer, Designer arbeite in einem Spannungsfeld divergierender Interessen, innerhalb derer er seine eigenen Soll-Vorstellungen anzusiedeln habe.

*Horst Rittel*

Horst Rittel



Issue-Based Information System

Robert Horn



Visual Analytics™

Jeff Conklin



Dialog Mapping

John Camillus



# Indicators of wickedness

1. a wicked problem has no definitive formulation
2. a wicked problem has no definitive solution
3. solutions to wicked problems are only better-or-worse
4. solutions to wicked problems have unforeseeable consequences
5. the solving process of a wicked problem is unique
6. a wicked problem is the symptom of another problem

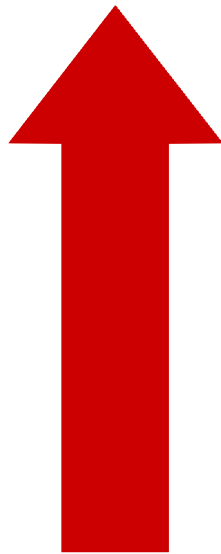
# Wicked problems?

| cultural policy   | case A | case B | conclusion                         |
|---|--------|--------|------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 no definitive formulation</li> <li>2 no definitive solution</li> <li>3 better-or-worse solution</li> <li>4 unforeseeable consequences</li> <li>5 unique solving process</li> <li>6 tangled problems</li> </ol> |        |        | <p>high<br/>medium<br/>or low?</p> |
|   |        |        | <p>yes or no?</p>                  |

| artistic policy   | case A   | case B | conclusion |
|---|--|--------|------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 no definitive formulation</li> <li>2 no definitive solution</li> <li>3 better-or-worse solution</li> <li>4 unforeseeable consequences</li> <li>5 unique solving process</li> <li>6 tangled problems</li> </ol> | <p>6 groups<br/>each checks 2 indicators for 1 policy<br/>either cultural or artistic,<br/>testing each indicator on 2 real cases,<br/>and concluding about the high, medium or<br/>low indication of wickedness</p> |        |            |
| <p>preparation: 16 minutes<br/>presentation: 4 minutes</p>  |  |        |            |



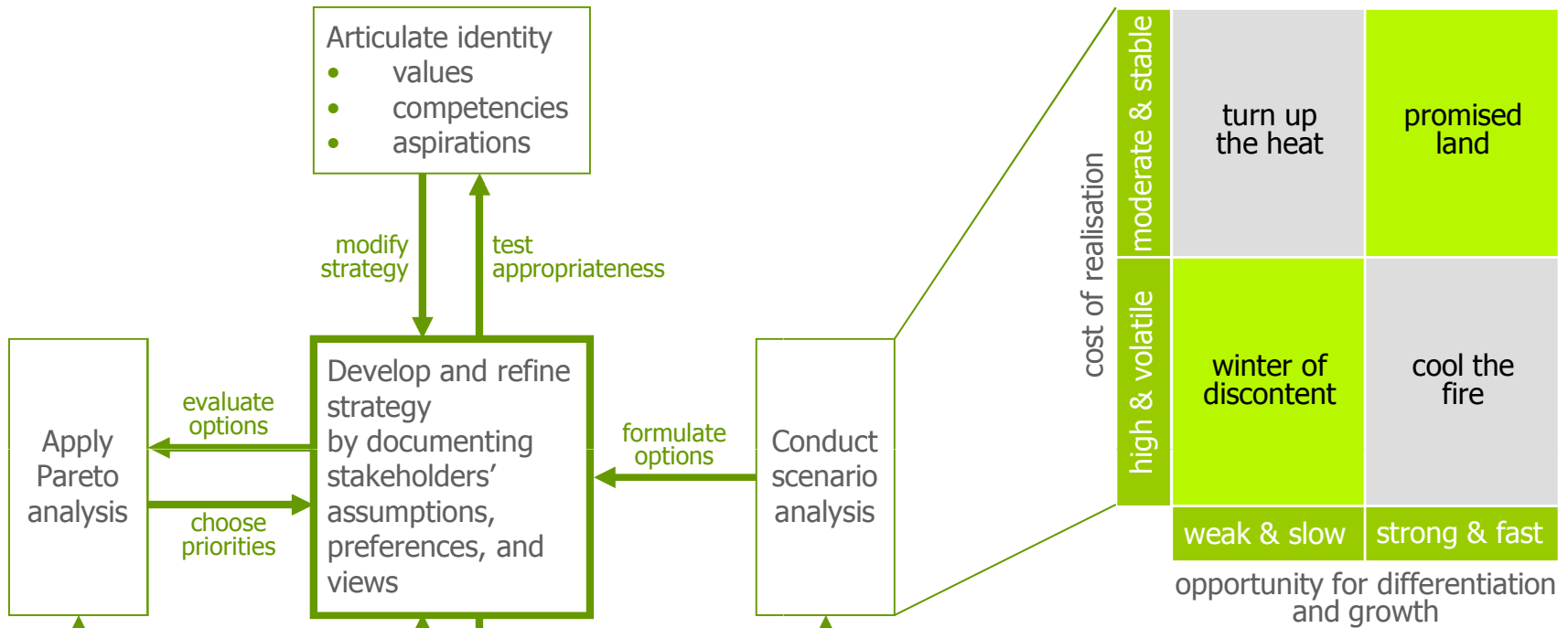
# The arts administrator faces wicked problems



## required skills:

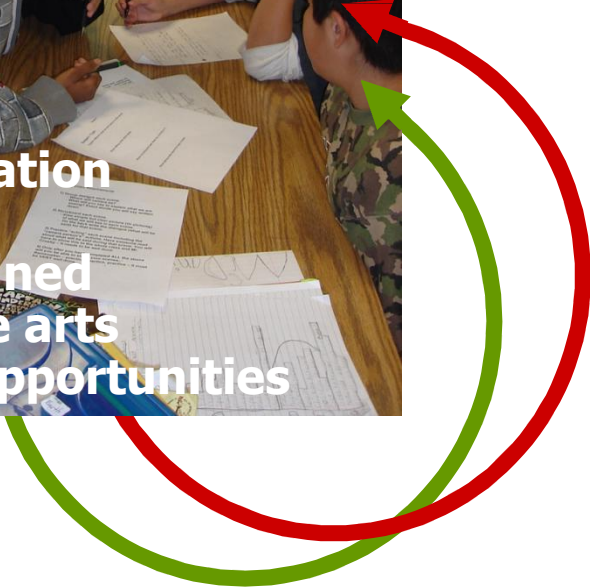
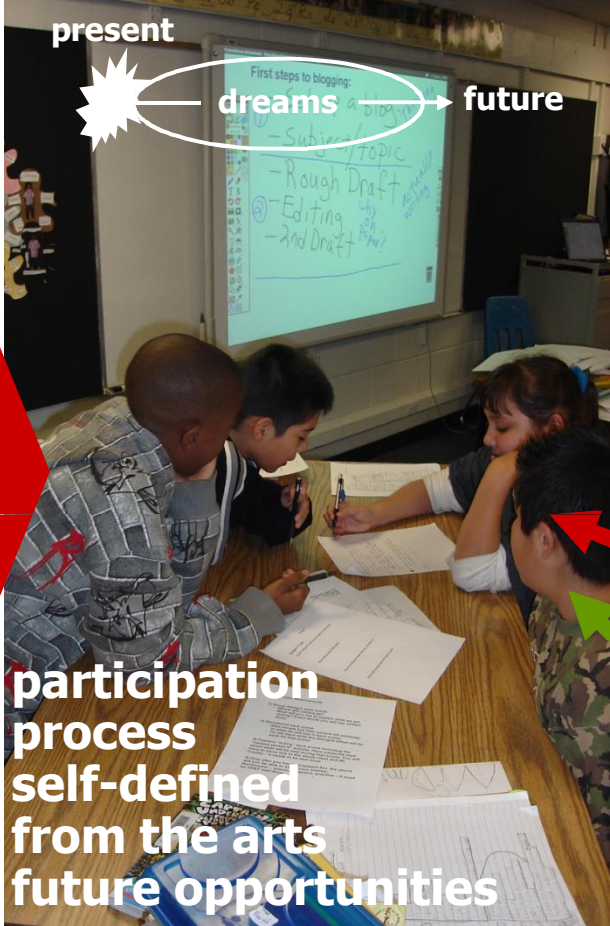
- vision
- dialogue
- ability to deal with the unknown
- openness to opportunities
- improvisation and reactivity
- risk taking
- conflict resolution
- expectation management
- respectful integration

# PPG's framework for responding to wicked problems

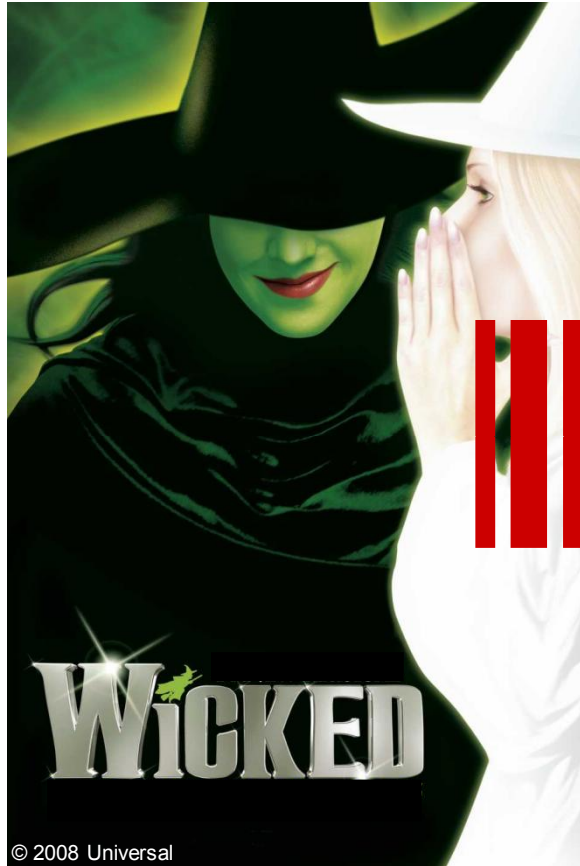


- Indicators of wickedness:
- 1 no definitive formulation
  - 2 no definitive solution
  - 3 better-or-worse solution
  - 4 unforeseeable consequences
  - 5 unique solving process
  - 6 tangled problems

# Participatory strategic planning process



# In a few months YOU will stand on the policy board!



then it's  
**YOUR** turn,  
**YOUR** wave!

