

DutchCu | ture

Mercury
running



Report on the 2021-2023
New Generations Programme

| Table of contents

	page
Introduction	03
Meeting up	04
Articles	09
Communications	12
Outcomes	14
Looking ahead	16
Conclusion	19

| Introduction

In 2021, DutchCulture launched the New Generations theme – NewGen in short – to better connect with young artists under 30 years old in the early stages of their professional career. Our aim is to increase our outreach to young makers, learn how they approach working across borders and to take their lessons on board. Our partners, including the International Cultural Policy Framework, often focus on youth and emerging makers in their strategies to create lasting connections between their host country and the Dutch cultural sector. Yet for various reasons, they do not always manage to reach out to this group. That's why DutchCulture sees it as vital to focus on emerging artists in the early stages of their career and to open their horizons to international cultural opportunities. We believe in a two-way dynamic process: international experience can be incredibly enriching in the early stages of artists' career, while the commitment to young artists can lead to lasting international connections.

Finding out more about young artists, their way of working and the themes they address, also yields insight into the future of international cultural exchange. This is why the focus called NewGen is not temporary or short-term, and why we seek to generate concrete feedback on our own work as a networking organisation. DutchCulture, and by extension its many institutional partners, need to obtain new insights and to refresh their outlook on working internationally in order to meet the needs of artists as good as possible.

Throughout the process, we tested and validated our assumptions about young artists based on the experience of 6 live meet-ups with artists, 14 online articles and other scheduled and unscheduled moments of contact. A few elements that we found to be true:

- emerging artists of this generation **switch between digital platforms to connect, create, curate and communicate about their work in new ways;**
- in addition, English proficiency and fluency is, if not increasingly among the skill-set of makers, a necessity for many. **As such, many Netherlands-based artists are aimed at international followers and collaborators;**
- the makers we spoke to are internationally oriented because **they represent a multicultural and globalised generation**, reflecting the many layers of Dutch society **with cultural links to other places in the world.** Dutch artists with mixed roots as well as foreign graduates from Dutch art schools feel at

home in multiple nations, cultures and languages, **enabling them to bridge differences and to code-switch quickly;**

- outspoken and curious about the many layers of their identity, they don't want to be pigeonholed according to their discipline, nationality, or gender identity. This fluidity was a recurring topic throughout our conversations.

The title of this publication, *Mercury running*, reflects this concept of fluidity. The title was inspired by multi-instrumentalist Steve Lacy's eponymous track. We also believe we can measure the temperature of the artistic landscape by observing these mercurial makers, as if using a thermometer. Of course, we also aimed to capture the practical side of things, by learning from the stories of young Dutch makers who recently completed an international project or travel. How did they manage this, from connecting to collaborating to showcasing? How could we in turn be of better service to them, adapting DutchCulture's instruments and tools to their wishes and needs? We talked to movers and shakers from various disciplines, because we believe that this generation of artists combines the skills and drive to create meaningful cultural exchanges that transcend disciplinary borders and barriers. In the process, we saw that perhaps the most important outcome was that we created a sense of community of makers interested in working internationally, working across disciplines and sharing their stories. We gladly invite you to look back on the articles, programmes and portraits we made from mid-2021 to early 2023, before showing the impact of our efforts and the future steps we intend to take.

Team NewGen



Photo: Lotte Bosch

| Meeting up

As part of the NewGen programme, we organised 6 physical events, so-called meet-ups, focused on networking, knowledge exchange and inspiration. Each meet-up offered a temporary portal for us to learn from artists, to create connections and to introduce DutchCulture's story. We reached out to artists and cultural professionals, inviting them to gather around a particular theme, always with the objective to both inspire and connect. We invited panellists to reflect on a recent international experience and show some of their work, and by gathering in smaller break-out groups to further explore shared challenges, we achieved our learning and networking objectives.

The accessible and relaxed nature of our meet-ups allowed us to try new formats of listening and speaking to creatives, for example through speeddating, mock projects and working in small groups on dilemmas. We believe that by adapting to the outcomes of the meet-ups and follow-up conversations, we can position ourselves more successfully in the cultural field. Over the past 2 years, we have built a lively network of artists and creative professionals in their twenties, in the Netherlands and across the world. In this process, the meet-ups were instrumental to form new connections and reflect on identified challenges such as working digitally, interdisciplinary crossovers and internationalisation.

Meet-up #0: Ahead of the Pack @ DutchCulture, Amsterdam

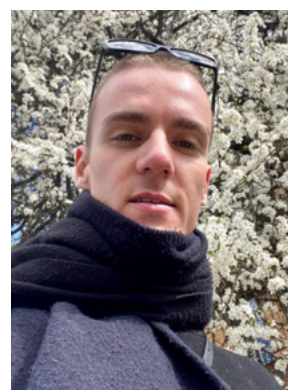
On 2 July 2021, still under the COVID-19 restriction of not being able to gather in large groups, DutchCulture invited 4 young artists to its office for an informal meet-up to discuss the newly developed New Generations theme. Some key characteristics that emerged were their autonomous and intuitive way of networking, the ability to speak and communicate openly about their work in both casual and more institutional settings, and acquiring international experience on that basis. Due to COVID-19, many opportunities for spontaneous connections to form had been lost. They recognised that a sparring partner with knowledge and advice such as DutchCulture would have been very useful in this period, and having that support going forward would definitely help. As the stories of these 4 individuals showed, gaining national recognition wasn't always a necessary stepping stone towards working internationally. However, funding requirements sometimes pose obstacles. The topic of internationalisation for its own good was raised, and Salihu emphasised the value of being rooted locally and having your 'own audience base'.



Photo: DutchCulture

People tend to panic when I try to explain all the different things I do, they often think it's impossible to perform well. But I'm a storyteller, it's just that each time the medium is different.

- Rozienna Salihu



Rozienna Salihu, Tobias Groot, Zindzi Zwietering, Lisette Ma Neza. Photos: Kilian Kayser, Tobias Groot, Zindzi Zwietering, Zsara Grünfeld

Meet-up #1: - Gearing up for international exchange @ Lab111, Amsterdam

On 1 October 2021, DutchCulture organised its first official and public New Generations meet-up. A diverse group of 18 young artists based in the Netherlands came to share their experiences with working abroad so far, as well as their international ambitions for the future. Among the participants were some familiar faces; we welcomed documentary photographer and visual artist Zindzi Zwietering, who had also joined us during our kick-off, and Mart Veldhuis, who designed the NewGen look for communication purposes.

It is almost impossible to reach your international goal on your own, you'll need others. Sometimes you have to overcome some inner obstacles before you start contacting formal institutions or applying for funding schemes.

- Joya Mooi

October 2021 - Embassy Culture Days

On 25 October 2021, the annual Embassy Culture Days were attended by cultural policy officers from 23 countries from the International Cultural Policy Framework. We invited filmmaker Joosje Duk, musician Joya Mooi and slam poet Lisette Ma Neza, who spoke in a talk show format with programme maker Simon de Leeuw, presenting to the diplomatic missions their international careers, their way of working, and their international potential to the participating diplomatic missions.

Don't underestimate how difficult it is to start out. In a sense, our limitations may help us, and in my case, I found my voice in smaller works and now I feel more ready for my first feature. The Dutch way of working is not so over the top, and can help you focus on these smaller steps.

- Joosje Duk

After the event, 5 participants attended a meeting and speed-date session at DutchCulture with the ArtsMap team, linking Turkish and Dutch creatives. They signed up to the online platform to find Turkish collaboration partners and connected with each other. One other participant, Joya Mooi, successfully applied to the International Heritage Cooperation Matching Fund.



Lemuel de Graav,
Esmay Wagemans
& Loradeniz.
Photos: Sean Louw
& Lin Hou Oei,
Esmay Wagemans,
Begum Yamanlar.



We live in a time where
young girls are tiktokking
and young boys are hoolahooping
and splitting
All of us are limited,
but full of freedom, learning
from the light of the
other, learning from the
language of the other,
learning that we are the
other, that we are different
from each other,
learning that we are each other.

Lisette Ma Neza,
Ode to my Generation

Photo: DutchCulture



International collaboration could benefit a lot from networking platforms that help facilitate funding application processes.
- Emilia Tapprest



Emilia Tapprest, Vera van de Seyp, Cesar Majorana. Photos: Emilia Tapprest, Vera van de Seyp, Miret Pelgrom

Meet-up #2: Feet on the Ground, Work in the Cloud, Podium Mozaïek, Amsterdam

On 7 April 2022, we met up with 22 artists to focus on the various online dimensions of artistic practice. During the pandemic years, life was increasingly confined to the 4 walls of our homes and it was hard to meet people by chance. Such spontaneity and social connections can be key, not only for cultural connectivity but also for creative processes. DutchCulture’s NewGen team specifically wondered what this meant for the artists and makers of the new generation.

We invited designer/creative coder Vera van de Seyp, writer/podcaster Cesar Majorana, and designer/filmmaker Emilia Tapprest to share their approaches to digital practices in a panel on stage. Discussions continued in 3 breakout groups, each with a small audience, tackling 3 dimensions in the relationship between artistic endeavours and the digital world: digital art practice and content, outreach and collaborations.

The NewGen team members led the discussions with special attention for the subjects of an interdisciplinary approach and international collaboration.

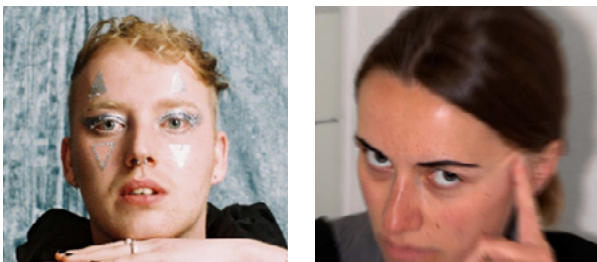
To give concrete shape to a digital platform that DutchCulture created, we asked Irem Sezer Kalyoncu, manager of digital platform ArtsMap Turkey, to show the artists how to find partners in Turkey online, in an accessible way.

Digital artist Enrique Arce Gutierrez joined a collaborative residency project facilitated by the Dutch Embassy in Senegal, 3 more participants signed up to the ArtsMap platform to find collaboration partners in Turkey, and Cesar Majorana joined DutchCulture’s advisory board (consisting of 10 artists and creative professionals from all disciplines). He also wrote a guide Dutch creative sector for DutchCulture’s webpage.

Meet-up #3: Jacks of all Trades, Masters of Grunn @ Noorderzon Festival, Groningen

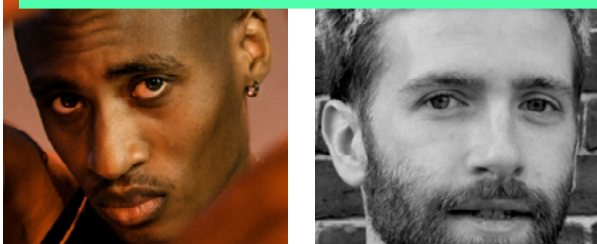
On 24 August 2022, DutchCulture took over the beautiful Pollux tent at the Noorderzon Festival in Groningen, to host a meet-up for young performing artists based in Groningen and Friesland. The goal of this event was to connect to and learn from a young and talented pool of performing artists from the north of the country. What are the challenges they face, what are the ambitions they have and how can we assist them in the future?

We invited 4 artists to be guest speakers on a panel: theatre maker Philipp Cahrpit, singer-songwriter/producer Liza Dries, multidisciplinary artist Blondeau and dancer and performer Juersson Hermanus. A diverse group of around 28 artists and professionals participated in the event, varying from interdisciplinary theatre makers to classical musicians from the Prince Claus Conservatorium. Apart from establishing a valuable connection to emerging talents and key figures in the cultural ecosystem of the northern Netherlands, this meet-up made us realize the importance of linking up with internationally active platforms in all regions of the Netherlands once again. The participants signalled a strong need to create more awareness of the available opportunities for international collaboration. It is clear that DutchCulture needs to increase its visibility in different regions and at arts academies. Working together with a talent development programmes, such as Hit the North in Groningen, offers DutchCulture unique access to regional networks of emerging artists from various disciplines.



I've never been outside Europe, but now feels like the right time to do so. I'm looking forward to meeting people who already have experienced such a big step.

- Blondeau



Participant Jaukje van Wonderen was present in her capacity as a programmer maker and creative producer. After connecting with DutchCulture, she went on to organise an online artist-in-residency exchange between creatives from the Netherlands and Nigeria with the support of the Consulate-General of the Netherlands in Lagos, taking place in 2023.

Following the meet-up, we established further links in the north of the Netherlands thanks to beneficiary networks of the Creative Europe Culture and MEDIA strands, for example with the Leeuwarden-based Popfabryk as a valuable hub in the European Excite network. Similarly, Music Cities Network from Groningen offers co-creation opportunities to young urban artists from Groningen, Aarhus, Manchester and Hamburg.

Meet-up #4: The Other Story of a New Generation @ CoBrA Museum, Amstelveen

On 16 September 2022, we managed to create a hybrid event: a cross-over between a Country Focus event and a NewGen meet-up. This meet-up's goal was to provide a platform for the perspectives of young Moroccan and Dutch-Moroccan artists and cultural professionals against the backdrop of the exhibition *The Other Story: Moroccan Modernism* from 1956 till now. Therefore, we invited 4 young Moroccan and Dutch-Moroccan artists to shine their light on the works and themes presented, and on what art means to them.

The meet-up, with 26 participants, also focused on connecting and learning about working in Morocco. DutchCulture's Morocco advisor Myriam Sahraoui emphasised the importance of formal institutions in facilitating collaboration between Morocco and the Netherlands, and discussed the opportunities arising from a more profound cultural exchange. The openness towards working with Dutch artists and cultural professionals seems to be growing recently. Myriam Sahraoui had one thing to say to Dutch-Moroccan artists: "Go for it, the time is now."



ABOVE: Chama Tahiri, Sarah Amrani, Salim Bayri, Rebel Spirit
Photos: Kamil Tahiri, Pietro Kruithof, Eva Plevier,
Fayssal Zaoui LEFT: Blondeau, Liza Dries, Juersson Hermanus,
Philipp Cahrpit Photos: Thijs Jansen, Luna Grügen,
Nâis Bessaïh, Jos Kwakkel

Meet-up #5: All About Abroad
@ DutchCulture, Amsterdam

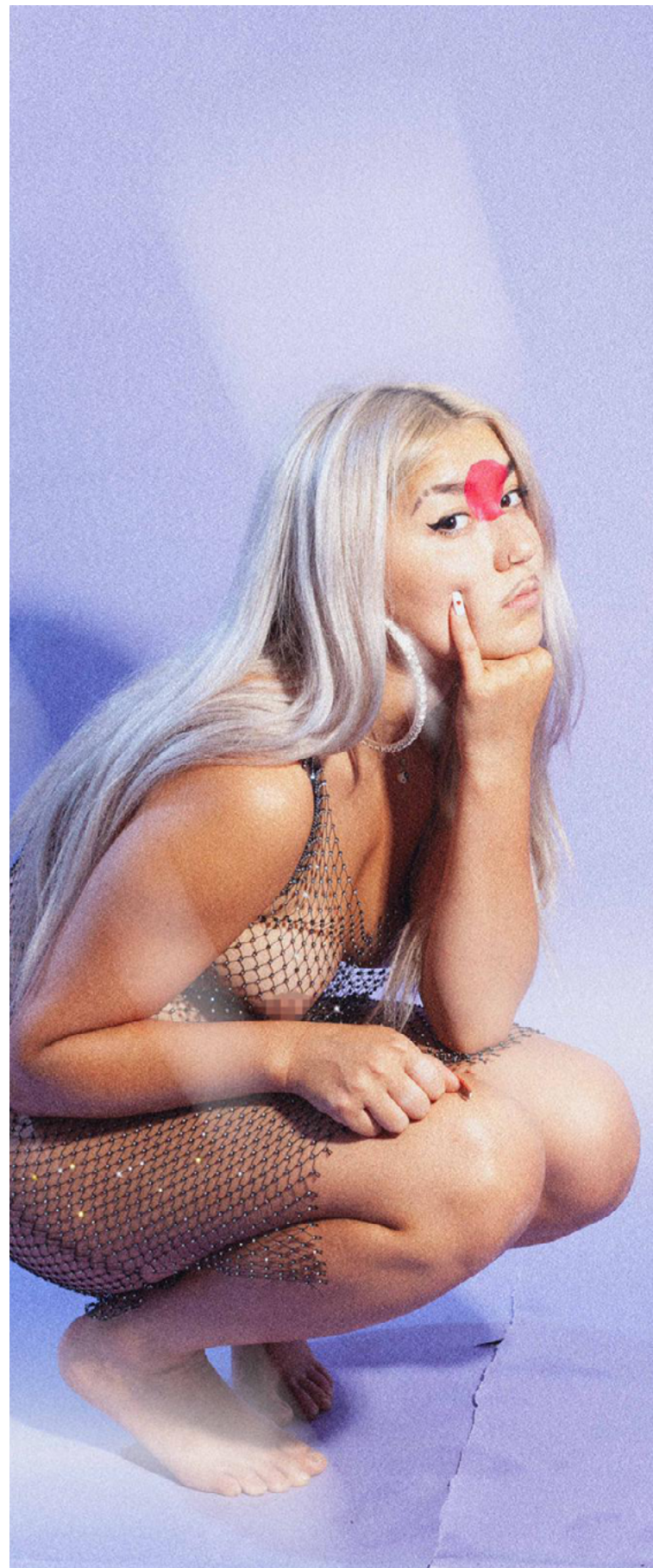
Our last meet-up of 2022, with 31 artists attending, took place at DutchCulture's office, on 3 November. It was the meet-up with the highest turnout so far. Our reach through social media, peer-to-peer recommendations as well as the central location in Amsterdam all contributed to attracting many interested creatives. On this occasion, we made use of our in-house advisors, by giving our TransArtists, Europe & Heritage, Creative Europe Desk NL, and Focal Country Desk an active role in the break-out sessions. This gave the various instruments in our toolbox a concrete and accessible form, which has been of practical use to the attending makers ever since.



Chieko Donker Duyvis, Enrique Arce Gutierrez
Photos: Melle Meivogel, Ivan Hidayat

After a brief look at the international projects of selected speakers Kiriko, Enrique and Chieko (the latter performing a concert as well), we all broke out into different groups. One playful way to increase more interaction within the groups was to ask artists in pairs to come up with a 'mock' project in a very limited amount of time, merging their artistic skills and interests into an ultra-brief shared project proposal. The duo then presented the results to the rest of the group, not only to show what they do, but also for our residency advisor to find examples of residencies in which similar projects have come alive. This playful and interactive method gave very concrete substance to both the profiles of the artists as well as the expertise of our advisors.

We were also able to present our written newspaper NewGen World to highlight the stories in DutchCulture's articles (see next chapter). As a result of the highly interactive break-out sessions, many wanted to stay in touch and stay informed. This experience prompted the idea of the NewGen WhatsApp group.



Kiriko Mechanicus. Photo: Lisa Schamlé

| Articles

As a retrospective record of the temporary moments of interaction with makers during the network events, we focused on written content to further capture NewGen's spirit. The articles offered artists an opportunity to speak about their work, to link to their platforms, and enabled DutchCulture to present the stories about emerging artists in an online context. Throughout the process, we focused on 2 distinct article series with different aims.

Above & Beyond: Focal Country perspectives

In the *Above & Beyond* series, we wanted to add contrasting international perspectives to the Dutch context. That is why we asked several young 'reporters' from Warsaw to Casablanca and from Bristol to Paramaribo to scratch the environment young artists in their city or country. Together, they showed how young creatives are often disrupting the cultural status quo. Overall, the articles have proven to be useful platforms to test some of the assumptions we have about young makers and to uncover new talent, as well as to establish new links with makers, creative professionals and organisations in the Netherlands and abroad, and finding authors to collaborate with.

These series did not exist in their own universe, however. The article about Casablanca by Chama Tahiri was consulted in preparation for our meet-up *The Other Story of a New Generation* at the CoBrA Museum in Amstelveen, and forms part of a larger knowledge dossier on Morocco. Polish author Karolina Plinta featured as a keynote speaker in DutchCulture's Country Focus: Poland webcast in May 2022. The Paramaribo article was consulted by the Ministry of Culture, Education & Science and several cultural organisations during a discussion on how best to connect and to identify needs of Surinamese cultural professionals and organisations.



Deborah Benzaquen, *Sweet Surrender*

Portraits: Profiles of Dutch-based makers

In our portrait series, started in 2021, DutchCulture's NewGen team interviewed inspiring Dutch-based artists and creative professionals who are working on exciting international projects that we will undoubtedly hear more of in the future. We selected their profiles based on their international experience, as well as through the innovative approach.



GINGE. Photo: Natalia Boorsma

In 2021, during the pandemic, we interviewed Sid Dankers and Mike Megens, who experimented with live streams questioning authorship and collectivism; the Amsterdam-based Theater DEGASTEN that participated in the SICK! Festival in Manchester with the support of the Dutch Embassy in the UK and of DutchCulture; collaborators GINGE and Natalia Boorsma about the impact of social media, the female gaze and their international ambitions; and mime artist Niek Vanoosterweyck, who challenges the experience of theatre and human movement through by introducing technology in his theatre work.

Continuing in 2022, in the same series we featured filmmaker Sven Peetoom about a theatrical spin-off he made in Switzerland that follows 3 third-generation Dutch-Indonesian youths who decided to explore their own family history; and Kiriko Mechanicus, whose work interrelates history, food, documentary film, writing, publishing, Japan, and video art; and Iris Kramer, founder of ArchAI, a company that uses AI and satellite imagery to detect, alert and monitor archaeological sites. Building a dossier helped to establish NewGen as a brand and in some cases, in the words of one of the interviewees, helped boost their legitimacy profile. Of course, all of these artists operate in very unique and different ways. What we found as common themes in our portrait series:

Interdisciplinary Exploration

All of the featured artists have backgrounds or interests that span multiple disciplines. They are not confined to a single medium or field but instead draw from various areas of study and practice. This interdisciplinary approach allows them to bring unique perspectives to their work.

Impact of Technology

Technology, particularly digital platforms and social media, plays a significant role in the work and careers of these artists. They leverage technology to showcase their art, to make new connections and engage with audiences, and to even create art that is specifically designed for online platforms.

Challenging Conventions

These artists are unafraid to challenge traditional norms and conventions within their respective fields. They experiment with new forms of art, question established hierarchies, and explore unconventional mediums.

Exploration of Identity

Identity, whether cultural, personal or artistic, is a recurrent theme. Several of the artists explore their own identities and how this intersects with their creative work. They also delve into issues related to identity, perception, and representation.

Narrative and Storytelling

Narrative and storytelling are central to the work of these artists. Whether through film, writing, performance, or other mediums, they use storytelling as a means to convey their message and connect with their audiences. Often, the story they want to convey is leading for the form through which it is told.

Social and Political Engagement

Many of the artists are socially and politically engaged in their work. They use their art to address important societal issues, challenge stereotypes, and advocate for change.



Digital artist and Rietveld graduate Enrique Gutierrez joined a collaborative residency with Senegalese choreographers, supported by the Dutch Embassy in Dakar in the context of a EUNIC-project. Photo: Smo Prod

Fluidity and Adaptation

These artists are adaptable and willing to embrace change. They are not bound by a single artistic style or medium and are open to evolving their practice as they explore new avenues and respond to shifting contexts.



Indisch Zwijgen by Sven Peetoom. Photo: Moritz Schermbach

NewGen World

To ensure that our articles reach a wider audience and connect with readers in a unique way, we have created an offline publication in a newspaper format, titled NewGen World. Printed on newsprint paper and also available online as PDF, NewGen World features a selection of articles illustrated with images from the artists involved, complemented with works by Mart Veldhuizen. This publication adds a fresh perspective to our features, compared to the online versions on the DutchCulture website. In November 2022, NewGen World made its debut and was distributed to the participants of our last meet-up, who eagerly perused its contents. Beyond this, NewGen World serves as a tangible representation of the essence of the NewGen programme and its international, programmatic scope. As a result, we have actively shared NewGen World with our stakeholders, including artists, ministries, art academies, museums and other organisations we collaborate with.

DutchCulture | NewGen World Cultural impressions of a new generation

What drives a new generation of artists and creative professionals across the world? This question was the starting point for us, DutchCulture's NewGen project team. As the Dutch organisation supporting international cultural collaboration, DutchCulture wants to better understand what young creatives and professionals in the cultural sector aspire when it comes to developing their (international) career. Over the past two years, we have created a substantial and lively network of artists and creative professionals in their twenties, in the Netherlands and elsewhere in the world. For and with them, we organised meet-ups on the topics of working digitally, interdisciplinary cross-overs and internationalisation. The networking sessions at every event have fuelled new collaborations and sparked artistic inspiration, all the while expanding our own knowledge of the changing dynamics of international cultural exchange. We are keen to keep track of this growing community.

Besides the live events, the written dossier of NewGen-articles on our website is expanding. In the articles, international correspondents cover the local cultural environment, and the way young people shape the cultural field in their city and country. In this publication of NewGen World, we travel from

Warsaw to Casablanca and from Bristol to Paramaribo. For the written portraits, DutchCulture interviewed three inspiring artists and creative professionals who are working on exciting international projects that undoubtedly hear more of in the future: digesting the past in a theatre play, researching the future of culinary history and using artificial intelligence in detecting archaeological sites.

Of course, the NewGen project and its events would not have been possible without the support of our stakeholders. A special thank you to our network: from professors at art academies reaching out to their students to cultural venues in the Netherlands hosting events and artists who don't count as the new generation but still wanted to help us to connect with their younger peers. We are of course, in the network of artists and creative professionals.

We hope you enjoy reading this dossier. Please follow our website www.dutchculture.nl/newgen for more about NewGen and future articles.

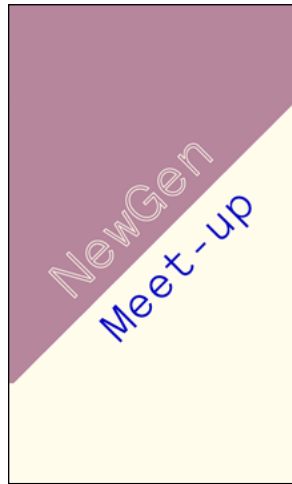


DutchCulture | NewGen World Cultural impressions of a new generation

What drives a new generation of artists and creative professionals across the world? This question was the starting point for us, DutchCulture's NewGen project team. As the Dutch organisation supporting international cultural collaboration, DutchCulture wants to better understand what young creatives and professionals in the cultural sector aspire when it comes to developing their (international) career. Over the past two years, we have created a substantial and lively network of artists and creative professionals in their twenties, in the Netherlands and elsewhere in the world. For and with them, we organised meet-ups on the topics of working digitally, interdisciplinary cross-overs and internationalisation. The networking sessions at every event have fuelled new collaborations and sparked artistic inspiration, all the while expanding our own knowledge of the changing dynamics of international cultural exchange. We are

keen to keep track of this growing community. Besides the live events, the written dossier of NewGen-articles on our website is expanding. In the articles, international correspondents cover the local cultural environment, and the way young people shape the cultural field in their city and country. In this publication of NewGen World, we travel from Warsaw to Casablanca and from Bristol to Paramaribo. For the written portraits, DutchCulture's NewGen project team interviewed three inspiring artists and creative professionals who are working on exciting international projects that undoubtedly hear more of in the future: digesting the past in a theatre play, researching the future of culinary history and using artificial intelligence in detecting archaeological sites.

Of course, the NewGen project and its events would not have been possible without the support of our stakeholders. A special thank you to our network: from professors at art academies reaching out to their students to cultural venues in the Netherlands hosting events and artists who don't count as the new generation but still wanted to help us to connect with their younger peers. We are of course, in the network of artists and creative professionals.



Content Strategy

As a knowledge organisation, DutchCulture offers insights into specific themes and countries. While we continue to deliver the main content in the form of reports and articles – see last chapter – the fact that the event page of our last meet-up is the most visited of all our web-content shows a steadily increasing engagement through our online and offline efforts. The articles in the *Above & Beyond* series have performed well, enjoying readership both in the Netherlands among DutchCulture’s own audience and in the author’s country of origin. They continue to serve as a valuable resource for colleagues at DutchCulture, as well as for our partners.

For social media as well as our own web content, we created NewGen stickers to accompany Mart Veldhuis’s work. This has resulted in a recognisable dossier under the NewGen banner. We intensified our visual communications, introducing a new type of teaser specific to our NewGen events and focusing on Instagram as the main platform. In total, we produced 5 teaser videos to increase our online reach and engagement.

The teasers for the meet-up at CoBrA Museum and Noorderzon events were among the top 10 Instagram posts of DutchCulture of all time in terms of outreach.

WhatsApp Group

Significantly, the focus of New Generations as a theme has created a community of young makers for whom DutchCulture can provide mobility and funding opportunities for international collaboration in the cultural sector, as well as peer-to-peer exchanges and information about upcoming events. To bolster the sense of community attained during the best moments of our physical gatherings throughout the last 2 years, we took the straightforward approach of setting up a WhatsApp group where curated content for such opportunities will be posted by the involved DutchCulture employees.

In December 2023, the group counted 144 members, and as we continue to inform and connect young artists, it is becoming an effective medium for bringing international opportunities closer. Many have learned about new ways to follow up on their international orientation - though some are more concrete than others (see WhatsApp poll). We will continue to finetune our communication with this group.



| Outcomes

Other than the written articles, the meet-ups and the total number of artists reached, what have we achieved in this process? How do makers respond and what needs need to be addressed? Has DutchCulture been useful to emerging artists, and if so, how? In order to measure the success of our activities, we needed feedback from the artists we connected to. We organised meet-ups and wrote articles and managed to fulfil the goals we set out to achieve. But have we also contributed to the international awareness of the makers, or better yet, have we been able to facilitate their concrete steps towards an international project?

Survey results

Firstly let's start with a larger picture. There are many takeaways that we can take on board from our journey from the artists' perspective. One important tool to gauge the impact over 2021 and 2022 years was a survey conducted among our new target group. With the survey results, we are able to simultaneously look back at the effectiveness of our efforts, as well as to look forward in time, as the answers indicate the routing which DutchCulture needs to evolve. In total, we collected 34 survey responses from makers who we connected to during meet-ups, conversations or through social media.

The following figures responses show data over 2021 and 2022, and for more than three quarters of the respondents, this was the same period in which they got acquainted with DutchCulture. (figure 1). All of the respondents have signalled that they either already followed up in another conversation with DutchCulture to continue speaking on a specific project, and the remaining voices know how to follow up in case of a specific question (see figure 2).

When was the first time you got in touch with DutchCulture?

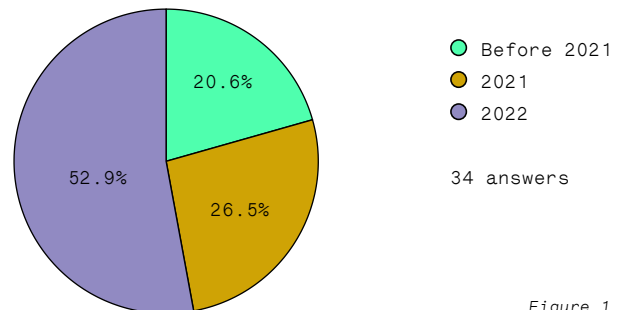


Figure 1

Have you been in touch with DutchCulture ever since?

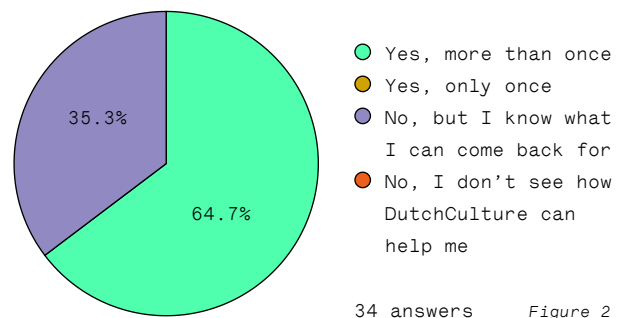


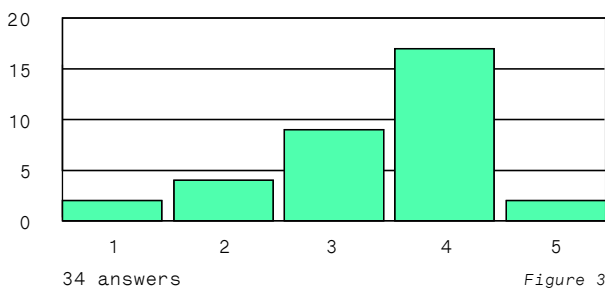
Figure 2



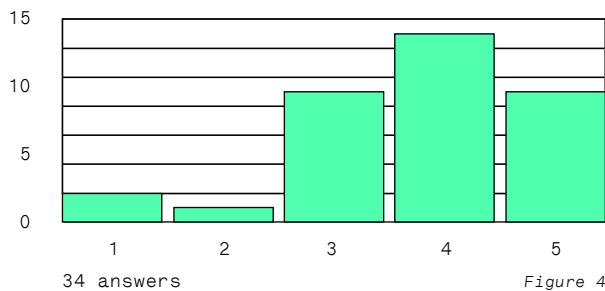
Christian Durieux and Dido Drachman, Charleroi, 2023. Photo: DutchCulture

In the following graphs the number 1 represents the answer: “not at all”, while 5 represents “very much so.” A high number of 24 respondents (figure 3) indicated they benefited in some way from speaking to a DutchCulture colleague, and 29 creatives would likely consult the organisation for advice again in the future (figure 4). Over 2023, we expanded the WhatsApp group from 40 members (January 2023) to 125 (December). The survey will be repeated this year and the sample size and its representative value will likely increase. Getting a clearer picture on the journey from NewGen into other advice instruments of DutchCulture is a very necessary integration of our larger Monitoring & Evaluation processes.

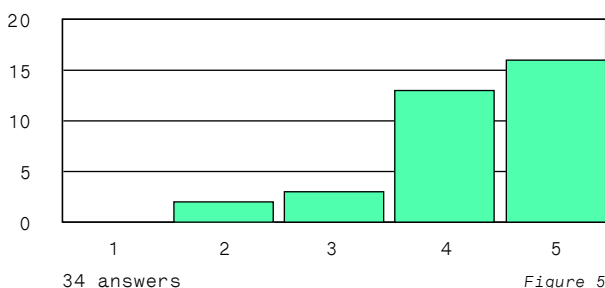
Do you know in what way DutchCulture could support your international ambitions?



Would you say you benefited from meeting (someone working at) DutchCulture?



Are you likely to consult or call upon DutchCulture in the future?



Knock-on effects

There are other outcomes that we facilitated through our work that we did not set out to achieve. While it's challenging to track and monitor these incidental outcomes, they are important results from our role as a networking platform. It is valuable input for the design of our future programmes. An event can lead to an advice conversation, it can lead to registrations and open call applications. Based on our articles and meet-ups, we reached the following known results:

- The organisation of five physical meet-up events as part of the NewGen program, for a combined total of 129 makers, creating connections and networks among participants;
- We know of 9 participants who signed up for the online artistic 'matchmaking' platform ArtsMap to find collaboration partners, a measurable uptake of the platforms;
- One participant successfully applied for the International Cultural Heritage Matching fund;
- Two makers successfully applied to Culture Moves Europe, an accessible international mobility scheme facilitated by the Goethe Institut and the European Commissions;
- Advisory Board Membership: one participant joined DutchCulture's advisory board, a strong outcome in terms of involvement;
- The formation of a WhatsApp group as an instrument to spread open calls more effectively and engage with a creative community;
- As a result, 5 artists have collaborated in projects facilitated by Dutch Embassies.

From August 2023, we've seen a larger sample size in from the whatsapp group respond with a clear need to connect more strongly with peers, to which we responded with more event postings and another meet-up planned in December 2023. These outcomes - as well as smaller polls conducted within the group chat - provide a great basis to develop further indicators and progress.

| Looking ahead

Although young and emerging artists and cultural professionals in the Netherlands have many opportunities to create, connect, produce and perform, and while the conditions exist in which both the independent and subsidised arts can thrive, it is not easy nor obvious how to make your first international steps. The people we spoke to and whose stories we have highlighted reveal that the success of these steps mainly depends on – other than curiosity and openness to experience – knowing on which doors to knock and where to find funding for border-crossing initiatives. However, seeking out these opportunities and finding funding are considerable hurdles that can be time-consuming. At the same time, we are also seeing increasing levels of precarity among independent practitioners in the cultural and creative sectors in the Netherlands. DutchCulture is strengthened in its belief that the skills, networks and knowledge we have in our organisation are increasingly relevant for emerging artistic professionals' success in the early stages of their careers.

Growing visibility

That's why young and emerging artists deserve a structural focus in DutchCulture's operations. Our advice regarding networks, funding, residencies and partnerships is of added benefit, especially early in one's career. But it is a two-way street, as said. We can only perform our role as an expert of international cultural collaboration if we continue speaking and listening to emerging makers. In order to do this effectively, we need to increase our presence at art schools and academies. Thanks to NewGen, we have been able to redefine our value proposition towards young makers and to incorporate this into all our communications with art schools, thereby building new and lasting links. We will:

- expand the WhatsApp group as an important focus group;
- build partnerships with art academies to offer guest lectures and workshops;
- find partnerships with talent development platforms;
- enhance our impact on relevant social media.

Activating the community

Since NewGen, DutchCulture is creating and facilitating links between a growing community of emerging artists with an international orientation. We don't believe that there are teachers and students in this sense, as the skills and connections demonstrated by young creatives signal the future of international collaboration and are vital for us to learn from too. We are eager to connect,



Salim Bayri at the COBRA Museum. Photo: DutchCulture

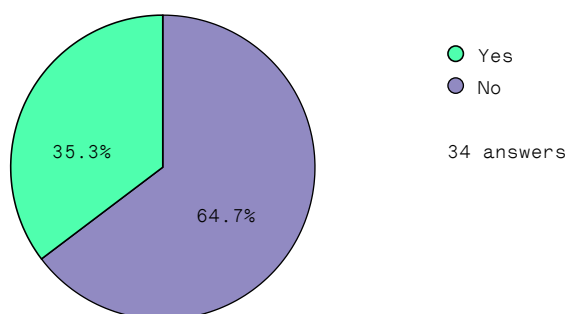
to learn from young makers and to create an interdisciplinary network that can reach out to each other based on their own international experiences. If we can increasingly facilitate these kinds of peer-to-peer contacts, we will have a circle of creatives that can continue to feed off each other in terms of networks and knowledge, and that we may consult as well. We are committed to:

- intensifying the community of the WhatsApp group by facilitating more peer-to-peer exchanges;
- involving and consulting emerging artists in projects and asking them for feedback;
- monitoring the international steps of emerging artists we have been in touch with since 2021;
- bringing the community of artists together during programmes and creating opportunities to share experiences.

Creating together

Increasingly, we are asking the group of artists and cultural professionals to think along with us about the content of our programmes. We will organise more meet-ups in 2023 in which our target group takes centre stage. Rather than predefining the subject, we respond to a challenge, need or issue identified by one or several artists in our community. DutchCulture can then facilitate makers by activating more networks, offering promotion and production, and a location for the event to jointly design the programme. This too can create stronger links and increase our understanding. As demonstrated in the graph survey below, there is an eagerness among our community to do this.

Would you be interested in co-designing a next meet-up with us?



Emerging artists' needs in the cultural field

We will continue to advise and offer specific expertise that responds to the needs of young artists, offering to help create open calls for collaboration projects. While we have to continue to listen to changing needs, we identify several needs as our first takeaways from the many conversations we have had so far:

- **Flexible funding:** Many of the artists we spoke to work across various mediums and may not fit neatly into traditional categories. Funding bodies should

offer flexible funding options that allow these makers to pursue their projects, whether they are creating documentaries, live streams, or multimedia installations.

- **Inter- or anti-disciplinary spaces:** There is a need for spaces and programmes that encourage interdisciplinary collaboration – both among art disciplines and between the arts and other societal fields. These artists seek out cross-pollination between different art forms and fields, so venues and initiatives that facilitate this collaboration, such as The Grey Space in the Middle or Baltan Laboratories, can be invaluable.

- **Online platforms and promotion:** Given the significance of digital platforms and social media in the artists' work, institutions should support them in building their online presence. This could include assistance with website development, social media strategy, and online exhibitions.

- **Mentorship, education and training:** Mentorship programmes and training platforms can provide the artists with valuable guidance, networking opportunities, and access to resources. These programmes can help them further develop their skills and expand their creative horizons. Institutions can offer learning trajectories that cater to the specific needs of artists working with new technologies and interdisciplinary approaches. Good examples are Noordstaat in Groningen, or The Artist and the Others in Maastricht/ Euregio.

- **Diversity and inclusion:** Recognising the artists' diverse backgrounds and perspectives, institutions can actively promote diversity and inclusion in their programmes, ensuring that underrepresented voices have a platform. This can for example be reflected in the contents and criteria of open calls.

- **Collaboration:** Encouraging collaborations among artists and institutions can lead to innovative projects and exhibitions. Funding bodies can offer support for cross-institutional partnerships and initiatives.



Photo: DutchCulture

International exchange

We will continue to support and promote the work and careers of emerging Netherlands-based makers, characterised by high levels of international connectivity and potential in combination with increasingly precarious career prospects after graduating, which is an issue repeatedly addressed by the Council for Culture. The added value of facilitating exchange and collaboration between young artists from different countries is that it promotes long-term international cultural relations and mutual learning. Within our specific role in the international cultural policy framework, we advocate for:

- **Open calls:** Open calls should be designed fairly and transparently, broadening opportunities to emerging artists of all backgrounds. A recent initiative, A Call to Open Calls by Platform BK addressed some of the structural design challenges of open calls circulating.

- **Advocating for fair payment:** while fair payment is increasingly on both the Dutch and European political agendas, this is not the case everywhere or in every country. Institutions should stand for the rights of artists to fair compensation for their skills and transparency. Our conversations with young artists continue to inform our advocacy in this regard, as shown in our FAIR P(L)AY report.

- **Artist-in-Residence programmes:** Dutch embassies can collaborate with local cultural institutions, galleries and residency programmes in their host countries to establish artist-in-residence programmes. TransArtists can play an effective connecting role in this regard. Embassies can also support artist-in-residence experiences and issue calls that are designed to accommodate emerging artists and to offer them the opportunity to work on their projects in a foreign setting. Embassies can provide logistical support, connections, and assistance with visa applications. We already highlighted residency opportunities together with our embassy partners in Spain, Indonesia and France.

- **Cultural exchange platforms:** Advocate for, connect to or develop cultural exchange platforms or events that bring together young Dutch artists and emerging artists from the country they collaborate in/with. These platforms can include exhibitions, workshops, panel discussions and networking events.

- **Feedback:** Continuously seek feedback from young artists about their experiences and needs. This can be done through surveys, focus groups, juries or even informal conversations. You could even establish a small advisory group, parallel to DutchCulture's advisory group or the Jonge Makers Platform of the Council for Culture. Use their feedback to refine and improve embassy support programmes.

- **Professional development:** Organise workshops, training sessions and mentorship programmes aimed at helping emerging artists develop their artistic practice and navigate the international art scene. Topics can include grant writing, exhibition strategies, and cultural relations.



During our FAIR P(L)AY events, artists and designers discussed fair remuneration and the need for (international) standards. We gathered at Nieuwe Instituut and Dutch Design Week respectively. Photo: DutchCulture

| Conclusion

The NewGen journey has been a rewarding one, resulting in a better understanding of the needs of young artists, highlighting talented creatives, and the steady emergence of a community. Looking ahead, we continue our commitment to cultivate the community and to reach out to emerging artists. Emerging artists are among the first ones to experience and respond to societal changes. We are eager to track their “mercury running”, as we grow, involving artists in project co-design, and tracking young artists’ international journeys. We will also continue connecting the needs of young artists with our various partners, focusing on flexible funding, fairness, interdisciplinary approaches, online promotion and mentorship.

The mid- and long-term impacts of the NewGen programme should be to:

1. increase the visibility and accessibility of DutchCulture and the international opportunities we can offer to emerging artists
2. establish a systematic exchange between DutchCulture and its audience of emerging artists
3. contribute to accessible structures and platforms matching the needs of emerging artists
4. fostering an interdisciplinary network of Dutch-based artists of the new generation



Photo: DutchCulture

This is the road that lies ahead, and we recognise fully that we are in this together with many partners. Together we can explore, connect, research and work together more than in the last 2 years. In sum, NewGen is not just a one-off project but a long-term commitment to promote and facilitate international cultural exchange. It's about celebrating young talent and supporting them in their path to meaningful international artistic exchange.

DutchCu | ture

Colophon

Throughout the period 2021-2023, many hands have made light work, while discovering and connecting the many dimensions of NewGen.

Special thanks to Jasper van den Berg, Lotte Bosch, Klaartje Bult, Coen Coomans, Lodewijk Rijs and Janna Schwab, for their efforts in shaping NewGen.

Programme team: Jacomine Hendrikse
Simon de Leeuw
Ian Yang
Productions: Eva Banning
Communications: Noor van Asseldonk Chen
Lonneke Bär
Eline Bingen
Dicle Gülşahin
Design: Huub Blekkenhorst
Illustrations: Mart Veldhuis
Cover photo: Rain Flowers,
by Dido Drachman and
Christian Durieux.
Charleroi, Belgium, 2023.
Photo: DutchCulture

© DutchCulture 2023