

PARTICIPATION IS POWER

By: Amanda Bohan (Originally published on Americans for the Arts ARTSblog)

Participation is crucial to the success of an organization, beyond just the act of attending of course. So I've rounded up a few of my favorite examples from arts and culture organizations that have successfully encouraged their audiences to participate on a deeper level:

- American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) Tweetups:**
AMNH understood the significance of Twitter from an early start. Since 2010, they've been holding special tweetup events that offer a behind-the-scenes look at various exhibits. Most recently, they held the [Whales Tweetup](#), allowing visitors to view whale specimens and listen to whale vocalizations after hours. And prior to Whales, they invited guests to explore [Our Global Kitchen](#), where guests enjoyed wine, chocolate, and cooking lessons, all while tweeting, resulting in hundreds of tweets, with the potential to reach thousands.

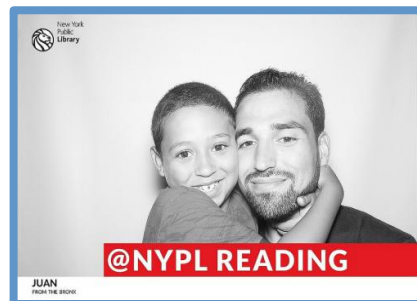


- Diablo Ballet's Crowdsourced Ballet:**



At the beginning of 2013, California-based Diablo Ballet asked their Facebook and Twitter followers to suggest ideas for a brand new ballet by tweeting to their page, using the hashtag #DiabloWebBallet. Followers were asked to suggest the theme and mood of the piece, as well as specific dance moves, ultimately resulting in the creation of the [first-ever crowdsourced ballet](#).

- New York Public Library's (NYPL) "Selfie" Photobooth:**
In an effort to connect with their audience on a deeper level, [NYPL added photobooths to their halls this past summer](#), encouraging visitors to take their own "selfie," which then gets sent to them via email and posted on the library's website. In just the first few weeks, they received over 1,900 photos and a huge number of social media mentions across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



- With Art Philadelphia's "Check in to a Masterpiece":**



During the summer of 2012, the city of Philadelphia launched With Art Philadelphia, a citywide arts initiative centered on the visual arts. Following the launch, ["Check in to a Masterpiece"](#) was born, allowing both online and in-person visitors to experience art in a new way—by virtually checking in on Foursquare at 12 works of art in Philadelphia across six institutions. Taken directly from their

Foursquare page, "Anyone who has wished to be inside a Van Gogh painting can now get a bit closer to that dream."