**THE ARTS DIVIDEND**

**Why investment in Culture Pays**

By Darren Henley Publication date: 30 Jun 2016

**Darren Henley reflects on the value of our arts and cultural landscape, after journeying around England in his first year as Chief Executive of Arts Council England.**

*“This book talks about the Arts Dividend – the great benefits art and culture confer on our society. But art that is not engaging or pleasurable or cannot be enjoyed for its own sake is scarcely likely to have much of an impact in other ways. So we must always celebrate the intrinsic value of art as a human, emotional, transformative experience. That experience in itself is a reason for investing in art and culture. But it’s not the only reason.”* Darren Henley, from the introduction

In the past year Darren Henley has travelled the length and breadth of the country exploring how our arts ecology works. ***The Arts Dividend*** is full of stories from England’s flourishing arts scene from the largest civic enterprise to small arts projects in rural areas.

Darren Henley argues that a sustained, strategic approach to cultural investment pays big dividends in all of our lives. He identifies **seven** of these **‘dividends’** that flow from sustained investment in art and culture.

1. **The Creativity Dividend**: creativity is at the heart of great art and culture. Creativity changes a place and the people who live there for the better.
2. **The Learning Dividend**: all children deserve a richcultural education for its own sake, but it also provides children with a wide range of benefits, developing knowledge, understanding and skills.
3. **The Feel-good Dividend**: there is now a myriad of scientific evidence showing how taking part in cultural activities can improve health and wellbeing.
4. **The Innovation Dividend**: new technology is changing art forms, but it is also pushing arts and culture to wider and more diverse audiences.
5. **The Place-shaping Dividend**: artists, arts organisations, museums and libraries have the power to shape the identity of a place, to regenerate villages, towns and cities, turning around the prospects of entire communities.
6. **The Enterprise Dividend**: investment in arts and culture pays out economic benefits, including creating jobs and driving commercial success in related industries.
7. **The Reputation Dividend**: our country’s reputation is built on our culture. Many of those towns and cities that enjoy creative and economic success can point to the presence of cultural infrastructure and artistic output as a significant part of their success story.